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Dan Quayle: Golfing Through The '60s

PLUS, HIS DOPEY JOB PROGRAM • STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON 'LAST TEMPTATION'

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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CORRESPONDENCE

FOR THE LOVE OF PAMELA

To the editors:

Pamela Harriman has been that rare Washington person, a loyal friend, whoever is in or out of power and favor. I am surprised Henry Fairlie failed to criticize her for that quality ("Shamela," August 22). Rather, he took umbrage at the fact that Mrs. Harriman, not content with simply giving parties, decided to engage in politics and matters of policy. Mr. Fairlie's generosity of spirit and accuracy will surprise few. But many will fairly ask why THE NEW REPUBLIC declined to dispatch the article to its proper destination at the *National Enquirer*.

LESLIE H. GELB
New York Times
New York, New York

To the editors:

While the bulk of the well-to-do spent the last seven years having breakfast at Tiffany's, Pamela Harriman devoted herself to restoring the Democratic Party during the rule of Ronald Reagan. For sure, she helped us rebuild financially. But Pamela also cares deeply about two other, equally important pillars for our political party: ideas and the means to communicate them. A thoughtful series of "Democratic Factbook(s)" and a state-of-the-art communications facility in the Democratic headquarters are further testaments to her work on behalf of the Democratic Party.

For shame-ela. By focusing on petty personal innuendo, THE NEW REPUBLIC obscured a simple fact: Democrats love Pamela Harriman because she stood with us during eight often lonely years in the political wilderness, never abandoning us—on arms control, or the *contras*, etc.—when some cut their principles to fit the fashions of the season.

TONY COELHO
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

HEART AND HOMELESSNESS

To the editors:

David Whitman's "Who's Who Among The Homeless" (June 6) contains serious distortions of my views. In discussing *Rachel And Her Children*, he states that "the majority [of homeless families] are black or Hispanic" and that I have misled the public on this and other points. His facts are in error. In most sections of the nation, a large majority of homeless families are white. Whitman would be correct if he limited his statement to major Eastern cities, but in this case he would be saying no more than what I have stated in my book. "Most of us are black," says Rachel. "Some Puerto Rican. Some be white. They suffer too."

Whitman writes: "In his introduction to *Rachel And Her Children*, [Kozol] acknowledges that his welfare hotel includes families with alcoholics, mentally ill, prostitutes, drug addicts, and drug users. But he barely mentions them." This is an extraordinary statement. Rachel's story portrays a mother who is not only a drug user and a patient in a mental health clinic but also a woman who has resorted to prostitution and who describes this at great length. What Whit-

continued on page 49

Compromise may be the essence of politics. But it's the ruin of bourbon.

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FOUNDED 1914 — *A Weekly Journal of Opinion* — ISSUES 3,843 & 3,844

WASHINGTON, D.C. — SEPTEMBER 12 & 19, 1988

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THE NEW REPUBLIC, Vol. 199, Numbers 11 & 12, Issues 3,843 & 3,844, September 12 & 19, 1988. (Printed in the U.S. on August 24, 1988.) Published weekly (except for combined issues dated Jan. 4 & 11, July 18 & 25, Aug. 8 & 15, and Sept. 12 & 19, 1988) at 1220 19th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036. Telephone (202) 331-7494. Leadership Network advertising (212) 684-5500. Yearly subscriptions, $56; foreign, $81; Canada, $70. Back issues, $2.50 (includes postage & handling). ©1988 by The New Republic, Inc. (ISSN 0028-6583). Second-class postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices. Indexed in Readers' Guide, Media Review Digest. Available on microfilm from University Microfilms Intnl., 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 and Bell & Howell, Old Mansfield Road, Wooster, OH 44691. Member, Audit Bureau of Circulations. Unsolicited manuscripts can be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. **Subscribers:** Please send all remittances, changes of address, and subscription inquiries to **Subscription Service Dept., The New Republic, P.O. Box 56515, Boulder, CO 80322.** For subscription problems call **800-525-0643.**

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FROM WASHINGTON

THE BOOK OF PANDER

"Democrats . . . see community as a limited cluster of interest groups," observed George Bush in his acceptance speech August 18. Republicans, by contrast, define community (the cult concept of 1988) as: "the Knights of Columbus, the Grange, Hadassah, the Disabled American Veterans, the Order of Ahepa, the Business and Professional Women of America," etc. etc. etc. In other words, as an unlimited cluster of interest groups.

Four years ago the Democrats produced a lengthy platform full of detailed promises and were accused of pandering to special interests, as well as outlining a narrow ideological agenda. This year they produced a short, vague, anodyne document and were accused of hiding their actual designs. The Republicans, meanwhile, congratulate themselves on having produced a long, specific, honest document laying out their true philosophy.

In fact, the 1988 Republican platform, like Bush's speech, is a masterpiece of pandering. It's a special interest cornucopia, which features both hard-core pandering for the Republican hard right and outreach pandering to moderates and liberals. It's designed to offend no one except, perhaps, criminals on weekend furlough. Its only coherent philosophy is the hardly conservative one that money grows on trees.

The basic unit of pandering, Republican-style, is the tax loophole. By my count the GOP platform—having taken credit for the bipartisan tax reform that lowered rates by closing loopholes—promises 12 separate new special interest tax breaks. There are five for the oil industry alone—people-oriented measures such as "Elimination of 80 percent of intangible drilling costs as an alternative minimum tax preference item." Farmers are promised a reduction in "the so-called 'heifer tax,' *as just one example.*" (Emphasis added.) The promise to cut capital gains taxes in half—for top-bracket taxpayers only—is repeated three times.

But traditional Democratic-style pandering-through-spending is not ignored, either. An incomplete list: more (yes, *more*) Social Security payments for the elderly; a new catastrophic health care program for "our youngest citizens"; increased funding for Head Start; a new "Science Advisory Council" for the White House; several vast new outer space programs (space, the rest of the world will be glad to hear, is America's "manifest destiny"); and "the development of new facilities and treatment programs" for veterans, in celebration of President Reagan's creation of a Cabinet-level Veterans Department.

As Tim Ferguson pointed out recently in the *Wall Street Journal*, the platform does not call for the elimination of a single government program. And of course "*any attempts to increase taxes*" (emphasis not added) are verboten, specifically including any recommendations from "bipartisan commissions," such as the one prominent congressional Republicans have already signed on to.

A genuine political philosophy guides you through the choices and trade-offs that are an inevitable part of public policy. But the Republican platform avoids tough philosophical choices. Is energy exploration in the Arctic worth the environmental risk? Silly question. We will explore "in a manner that is protective of our environment and is in the best national interest." Would rules to address acid rain place too large a burden on business? No problem. "These goals can and must be achieved without harmful economic dislocation." Should children with AIDS be allowed in school? "We will protect the rights established under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act." However, "We will balance those rights against the public's right to be protected against diseases and conditions which directly threaten the health and safety of others." So that's settled.

But the platform is not all mush. There is raw meat for the far right, although it tends to be written in code that only the panderees will immediately grasp. On abortion, for example, the Republicans not only endorse the Human Life Amendment, but declare their belief "that the 14th Amendment's protections apply to unborn children." This doctrine, if accepted, would not merely repeal the constitutional right to choose abortion and return the matter to state legislatures, but would make it unconstitutional for any state to permit abortion. So much for federalism, judicial restraint, and other ostensibly Republican values. And it's hard to see any exception for rape or incest if the fetus is defined as a "person" with full constitutional rights under the 14th Amendment.

And there's Star Wars. "We will not negotiate [or] compromise plans for the research, testing, or the rapid and certain deployment of SDI." The platform claims "SDI is already working for America" because "[i]t brought the Soviets back to the bargaining table." There's a logical flaw here. If SDI is why the Russians are willing to deal, then there can be no deal without compromise on SDI. Despite other rhetoric to the contrary, therefore, the Republicans are saying no more nuclear arms control deals.

The platform also commits the Republicans to full military support for the *contra* war in Nicaragua, another minority taste despite years of effort by President Reagan to make it otherwise.

My favorite line in Bush's acceptance speech came in the passage where he was out to prove he's sensitive. He denounced "blind ambition," called for "concrete . . . acts of goodness," praised his wife for teaching poor children to read, then declared defiantly: "Some would say it's soft and insufficiently tough to care about these things." Oh yeah? Who? If Bush can name me three people who oppose "teaching troubled children through your presence that there is such a thing as reliable love" on the grounds that this is "insufficiently tough," I'll vote for him. Republicans don't count.

Clearly it's the Republicans, more than the Democrats, who are trying to hide a narrow, minority-taste ideology this election year. They want credit for liberal sentiments while denouncing "liberals" as if they were invaders from an alien planet. They pander madly to group after group without the honesty to admit that active government costs money. Michael Dukakis made a big mistake in saying that this election is about competence, not ideology. His party has the winning ideology. The Republicans understand this, even if the Democrats don't. □

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THE NEW REPUBLIC
SEPTEMBER 12 & 19, 1988

SHAKE OR BAKE

"GREENHOUSE EFFECT A FALSE ALARM?" So reads the headline of an article that oil and coal lobbyists like to hand out. The article, from an energy-industry newsletter, questions the validity of blaming fossil fuel emissions for the fact that the four hottest years of this century have come in the 1980s (not counting 1988, which will probably join them). After all, the Earth has always been subject to short-lived cooling and warming trends. How do we know this decade isn't one of them?

Nice try. It's true that the Midwestern drought and coast-to-coast discomfort of this particular summer, and even the uncommon warmth of this whole decade, *may* have little to do with the atmospheric accumulation of carbon dioxide and other "greenhouse gases." But there's no real doubt that the greenhouse effect is here, and here to stay. Forget this summer. Forget this decade. This century has seen a gradual global warming of around one degree Fahrenheit that corresponds neatly to the growth in greenhouse gases, whose heat-retaining properties are firmly established. This growth will continue even if the world acts prudently. If the world doesn't act prudently, growth will be so rapid that within a few decades the summer of 1988 will be a subject of fond reminiscences. The standard 21st-century scare scenario—prairies turning into deserts, forests turning into tropical forests, melting polar ice, an ongoing redefinition of beachfront property, and, all told, immense economic dislocation—is entirely plausible.

All of this has politicians scurrying to put themselves on record as firmly opposed to apocalypse. In late July two greenhouse-effect bills were introduced in the Senate, one by Tim Wirth of Colorado and the other by Robert Stafford of Vermont. These bills are part of a broader revival of environmental consciousness, a comeback so dramatic that even the *Republican* presidential candidate is now deeply lamenting ocean dumping and acid rain. (Here he forsakes the legacy of President Reagan, who memorably dismissed the defoliating effect of acid rain by noting that trees themselves sometimes emit acid.)

The new environmental consciousness is a fine thing, so long as it doesn't recapture the zeitgeist of the '60s too slavishly. The greenhouse effect is alarmingly different from city smog and polluted lakes. Keeping the planet from overheating calls for international bargains of unique complexity and dictates the sacrifice of one of the environmental movement's most sacred cows. As politicians begin grappling with the problem, they would do well to keep in mind eight sobering, easy-to-grasp, if hard-to-apply, reminders.

1. There's no free lunch. Ever since the environmental movement got a reputation for soft thinking, its leaders have been couching their goals in the language of the bottom line. Lately they've been asserting that the greenhouse effect can be fought by using energy more efficiently, which will make the American economy leaner to boot. This is one focus of the Wirth bill. It calls for tighter fuel standards on cars, energy efficiency ratings for the benefit of home buyers, longer-lived light bulbs, etc. All these goals are laudable. In fact, more radical reform is in order. The subservience of utilities companies to consumer

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groups that artificially deflate prices, encouraging profligate energy use, has to end. And a stiff gasoline tax (in addition to cutting the budget deficit) would encourage car pooling and mass transit. Although costly in the short run, these things would make for a leaner economy in the long run, especially given the likely increase in oil prices in years ahead. But greater energy efficiency, though worthwhile by definition, isn't enough. A real battle with the greenhouse effect will cost money: costly emission controls; costly conversion from evil fuels, like coal, to less evil fuels, like natural gas, etc.

Don't get us wrong. Environmentalists are right when they note that virtually *all* anti-greenhouse measures will have pleasant side effects, as the air becomes cleaner and the rain becomes less acidic. In this sense global warming is a convenient, tangible incentive to do lots of things we should be doing anyway. But for the most part these bonuses are environmental, not immediately economic.

2. Lunch isn't on us. The Stafford bill, much more than the Wirth bill, calls frankly for costly regulatory reforms, notably stringent limits on industrial emissions. What it fails to do is ask the obvious question: What's in this for us? Since the fruits of our sacrifice are dispersed worldwide, we only get a small fraction of the environmental return on every dollar spent. In the process, we'll fritter away the bargaining leverage that could convince other nations to chip in. And that's a lot of leverage: the United States alone is responsible for around a quarter of all greenhouse gases, so world leaders eagerly await our reform. Let's not give it to them for free.

Now, there's nothing wrong with a little "consciousness-raising" greenhouse legislation to get the world's attention. Thus, the Wirth bill's provisions—funding studies and pilot programs, subsidizing research into fossil fuel alternatives—are largely unobjectionable. But the stiff economic sacrifices in the Stafford bill should either

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

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10.	ALL SPOOKED UP	*	2

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

1. LES BONTEMPS ROULENT

The race. Enjoying the tony election debate? So far we've got, alleged and known, draft dodging, prescription drug abuse, sex with lobbyists, $10,000 breakfasts with lobbyists, venereal disease, wimpishness, shrimpishness, sweetheart legislation, academic mediocrity, the exploitation of wealth and privilege, and a piranha press corps. Oh yeah, and child care.

2. RIGHT GUARD

Vietnam. To put the best light on Quayle's Guard service, the GOP has been willing to repolarize the country. We were to note that Quayle, patriot he, didn't burn the flag, a desperate line that invited the country to replay the war at home. It wouldn't take much, it seems. This gambit is not merely pandering, it's irresponsible.

3. GETTING BOUNCED

Polls. Never mind The Speech, the GOP convention was a mess. So what, aside from polling incompetence, explains Bush's sudden lead in major polls? The answer is that Quayle helped Bush. Maybe there's no such thing as bad news early in the campaign. Any news that embeds your name in the great electoral synapse is good news. So what would that suggest about mass political behavior?

4. ON BEYOND ZIA

Zia. We like to make noise about so-called "winds of freedom" blowing here and there. Do we really care? Suppose Pakistan were now to gain a more democratic government, but one that wouldn't support the Afghan rebels. Would we welcome it? Nearby, China is treating the Tibetans vilely. Who's paying attention? Nobody. Feel-good geopolitics has left no room for them.

5. GET ONE'S IRISH DOWN

IRA. The tragedy of Northern Ireland is an unending story without an emotional center in its American retelling. The British and Irish are virtually the only two groups Americans like. As a result, there is neither debate nor discussion of the facts here, nor any desire for either (as Mayor Koch has discovered). Our major contribution: a resigned tsk-tsk.

6. A GOOD FACE ON THINGS

Women's votes. Women may or may not vote for Quayle, but the notion that women pointedly ignore handsomeness is ideological nonsense. People—women among them—frequently vote on the basis of visceral reactions. Anyway, the point isn't a pretty face; for both men and women, it's virility. What do you think the whole "wimp factor" stuff has been about?

7. THE L-SHAPED WORD

Liberalism. People should be laughing aloud at the fight over the term (epithet?) "liberalism." That they aren't indicates how devoid our politics is of ideas. Look: Dukakis, the "progressive" who seems to be smart, is publicly anti-ideology. Bush is pro-ideology, but it's one that doesn't seem to be his. This isn't Plato's cave, it's the shadow of Plato's cave.

8. LOSING THE EDGE

The egg-shaped car. The seesaw struggle between rounded, aerodynamically efficient car design and sharp-edged design is tilting decidedly toward the round. Curiously, little is being made of the design; in the past, it was accompanied by lots of "futuristic" ballyhoo. This time around, the future is settling in quietly for purposes of efficiency.

9. UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Sobriety. The anti-alcohol mood is showing up at the box office. Both *Arthur II* and *Cocktail* were scolded for their portrayal of drinking, and some people are wrinkling their noses at *Cheers*. Several comic strips are under fire, as are greeting card companies. Any representation of alcohol will now draw attention to itself. Is Carrie Nation still a comic figure? Not for long.

10. ALL SPOOKED UP

Elvis. Seen Elvis lately? Thousands of people say they have, and multitudes more are buying a book about the living Elvis. There's even the occasional near-miracle popping up. In hagiography, this sort of thing has a name: it's a *cultus*, and it speaks clearly to the nature of Western spiritual tensions. Seen Jim Morrison lately? James Dean? Marilyn Monroe? JFK?

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await international cooperation or be made contingent on such cooperation.

3. Lunch will be a logistical nightmare. The 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, in which 24 nations agreed to reduce the use of ozone-eating chlorofluorocarbons, is often cited as an encouraging precedent for enlightened international cooperation. This is true, so long as the word "encouraging" isn't given too much emphasis. The sacrifices it calls for, though high by historical standards, fall short of courageous. And so far, only a few of the signatories have actually ratified the agreement. Besides, next to the complexities of the greenhouse effect, curbing the depletion of ozone is simple. Perhaps the best thing about the Montreal Protocol is that its sponser, the United Nations Environment Program, is now poised to move on the greenhouse effect.

4. One nation's poison is another nation's meat. Ozone depletion is a straightforward problem, so the object of the game is simple: reduce chlorofluorocarbons and halons. Greenhouse gases, in contrast, range from carbon dioxide to methane to various other chemicals (including chlorofluorocarbons), and these gases themselves have diverse sources. Fully a fourth of the carbon dioxide emitted comes from burning forests to make room for farms and ranches in places like Brazil. (And not only do the burning trees create carbon dioxide; their subsequent absence slows the natural recycling of carbon dioxide into oxygen.) In China the problem is an emergent industrialization fueled by large coal reserves. And in both cases the challenge is tougher than the one faced in the United States and Western Europe. How do you get rapidly developing, hand-to-mouth nations to give up their first taste of economic security in the name of some vague and distant scare scenario? Environmentalism is a luxury they can't afford.

To complicate things further, the greenhouse effect won't take its toll uniformly. The details are fuzzy, but it's clear that some nations will fare better than others. Though droughts may become a way of life in the Midwest, there will be more rain elsewhere (more, on balance, worldwide—too much in some places), and Canada may find some of its thawed land suddenly tillable. While Bangladesh could lose nearly half of its land to rising oceans by the middle of the next century, some Siberians will welcome a chance to break out the lawn chairs and Coppertone. On balance, though, virtually every nation is likely to lose; Canada may see its seal fur trade shrink as the northern reaches warm, and besides, economic adjustment to a rapidly changing climate is inherently wrenching. It's in recognition of this that Canada and the Soviet Union, two nations that could stand a little more heat, are on board for preliminary U.N. talks on the subject.

5. Machines don't pollute; people do. A creative international agreement would cater to the circumstances of different nations. Even economically young nations that firmly defend their greenhouse-gas emissions can do something to help: have fewer babies. Human beings contribute marginally to the greenhouse effect just through breathing, flatulence (the dreaded methane emission), the consumption of livestock that are also prone to those two things, the pressure that population growth exerts on forests, and assorted other factors; in Asia, more people mean more rice paddies, which exude methane. More important, today's subsistence farmer is tomorrow's bourgeois energy guzzler. If we're going to think long-term about the greenhouse effect—and if we're not, there's no point in thinking about it at all—a central goal must be to get the world's population growth under control. One approach is a simple deal between industrialized and industrializing worlds: we'll cut down mainly on emissions, you cut down mainly on kids. When you're our age, you can shift the emphasis to emissions.

6. There's no free rider. No international agreement can save the planet unless it addresses the temptation to bask in the benefits without making the sacrifices. The Montreal Protocol has an elegantly simple (though as yet untested) device. Its signatories pledge not to buy chlorofluorocarbons from non-signatories. There is no single, similarly natural candidate for trade sanctions in the case of the greenhouse effect, but on the other hand there's no reason the products chosen for sanctions have to be related to the problem. Those nations willing to sacrifice for the planet's future can treat themselves to any sort of reciprocal trade advantages and then deny them to everyone else. If forming such a freer-trade league proves too complicated, the incentives for participation will have to come from the United Nations, which can make technical assistance, or the World Bank's financial assistance, less a right and more a privilege.

So long as an international agreement has teeth, it doesn't have to be all-inclusive at first. If the biggest culprits can come to terms, and create real leverage, they can gradually coerce the rest of the world into following. The Western alliance and the Eastern bloc, which together account for well over half the problem, have enough economic clout to get concessions from other major offenders. There's no precedent for international action of this scope and complexity, but there's no precedent for the greenhouse effect, either.

7. All we are saying is give nukes a chance. The prospect of closer international cooperation is the upside of the greenhouse effect. The downside—in addition, of course, to the effect itself—is that everyone, even Pete Seeger, is going to have to take a second look at nuclear power. For the time being, it's the closest thing to an efficient, widely available alternative to fossil fuels. The only likely rival for that title in the long run—solar energy—certainly deserves much more in government R&D funds. (A solar investment is sound industrial policy, anyway, since the world's demand for alternative energy sources will grow as things heat up.) But only a technological breakthrough will make solar energy anywhere near as efficient as the best nuclear plants, so for the next few decades, nukes will probably be an indispensable part of the answer.

The standard complaints about nuclear energy are losing

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their force. The next generation of reactors may not be "inherently safe," as they're being billed, but they can be made close enough to that for comfort. This fact should permit a more rational licensing system, one not in the thrall of the most fearful local citizens and the most demagogic politicians. As for the terrorist problem: the fuel won't be weapons-grade, as the fuel for breeder reactors is.

And when people ask about the disposal "problem," the answer is: Compared to what? Each year the burning of fossil fuels sends well more than five billion tons of life-shortening carbon into the environment uncontrolled. Nuclear reactors worldwide annually produce seven *thousand* tons of waste, which has the virtue of being in tidy packages. True, it's hard to find a state eager to provide a home for them, but that's a political, not a technological, problem. Sealing and burying the stuff will keep it innocuous for centuries to come. In view of air pollution's subtle shortening of human lives, it's safe to say that, even after Chernobyl, fossil fuels are costing many more years of human life than nuclear fuels. Once you throw in the men who die on oil platforms and in mines, the case is even stronger.

8. Wanted: Jerry Brown minus the Zen. Former Governor Brown's spaceship-earth spiel had only two problems: (*a*) timing (it would have been better for his career had he burst on the scene months ago instead of years ago) and (*b*) his aura of spaciness, which suggested, however unfairly, ignorance of the complex bargaining behind global cooperation. What we need now in a national leader is Jerry Brown without the far-off look in his eyes. Of the two presidential candidates, neither fits the part exactly. George Bush just spent eight years sitting back silently as his mentor mocked environmental concerns, slashed research funds for alternative energy sources, and generally ignored the state of the planet. (Not to mention the Republican hackles raised by the mere mention of the term "population control.") Michael Dukakis has no such past to hide, but his politically convenient opposition to nuclear energy is aging fast. Dukakis has a way out, though: he can just say that his aversion to nukes was pre-greenhouse and directed at the old, clunky, dangerous reactors, not the new, safer ones. George Bush, of course, can say what he always says: that was last year's Republican model; this is this year's.

NOTEBOOK

☐ THE CULTURE OF PLAGIARISM, CONTINUED: No one can deny the eloquence of Peggy Noonan, who wrote George Bush's acceptance speech. Bush's delivery was pretty good, too. The speech adjusted all the dials and balanced all the scales with scientific precision: loyalty with a touch of independence, poetry and pride but also humor and humility. It touched all the conservative hot buttons while offering reassuring nuggets to liberals. And, of course, it swore to avoid raising taxes while promising an active government that would cure all current woes. The consensus in the political community is that the speech gave Bush everything he previously lacked: stature, personality—even "the vision thing." According to the *Washington Post*, Bush "blew away a large part of the heavy rap against him." Under what seem to be the rules, it doesn't matter that Bush had virtually nothing to do with the speech's creation, or that the speech's content had few discernible roots in Bush's political history. Indeed, in modern politics it is almost an advantage when a candidate is an empty vessel into which experts can pour lab-tested formulas. The nation's high tolerance for artifice in such matters is nicely illustrated by a small example: Bush's assertion that his wife told him to relax and "put up your silver foot" just as he was "working on" [sic] the part in the speech about their salad days in Texas. Leave aside what he meant by "working on." And leave aside how likely it is that Barbara Bush really did make this little joke. (Actually, it wasn't funny enough to make us seriously doubt *that*.) But how likely is it that, as Bush claimed, she walked in and shared this gem with him just as he was preparing his counterthrust to the Democrats' "born with a silver foot in his mouth" salvo? Well, facts are stupid things.

☐ THE GENDER GAP:

"His name was George something—I don't even remember—and he went to Andover. Big, big deal. You should have seen him when Sally asked him how he liked the play. He was the kind of a phony that have to give themselves room when they answer somebody's question. He stepped back, and stepped right on the lady's foot behind him. He probably broke every bone in her body."

—*The Catcher in the Rye*, Chapter 17

(thanks to Douglas Hahn, Manasquan, New Jersey)

☐ THE FOG OF PEACE:

THE WINDS OF INFLATION ARE BLOWING A LITTLE HARDER

"Oil prices have stopped falling, and an end to the Iran-Iraq war could enhance OPEC's unity and broaden its market power." —*Business Week*, August 8, page 19

WHY THE INFLATION SCARE IS JUST THAT

"Worldwide oil production already exceeds demand. . . . If the Iran-Iraq war is truly over, the existing glut seems likely to grow even larger, as the two devastated foes seek funds for reconstruction." —*Business Week*, same issue, page 32

(thanks to Ron Lanoue, Newton, Massachusetts)

☐ L'CHAIM:

Study Finds Bypass Surgery Improves Long-Term Survival

—*Washington Post*, August 11

Study Questions Coronary Bypass Benefits

—*New York Times*, same day

(thanks to Joan Hartman, Washington, D.C.)

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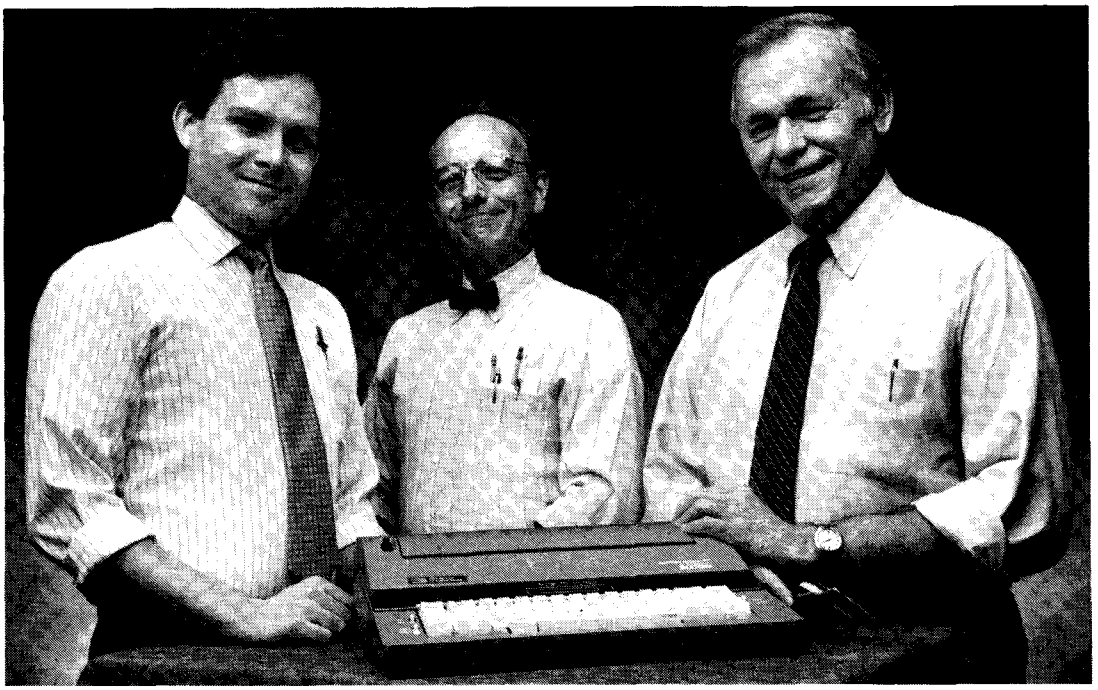

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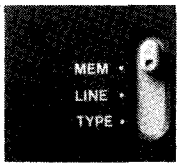

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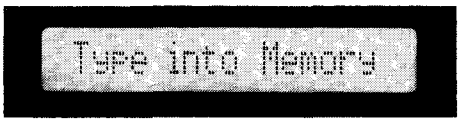

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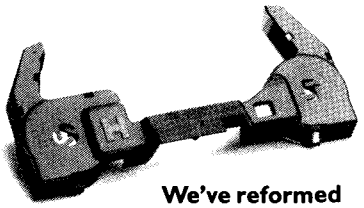

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□ TWO-WAY TRAFFIC:

Thornburgh denies he withheld report on drug trafficking

—*Houston Chronicle*, August 6

Thornburgh admits role in suppressing report

—*Houston Post*, same day

(thanks to Michael A. Hoye, Houston, Texas)

□ LOCAL NEWS: Dorothy Wickenden, TNR's managing editor since 1981, will be on leave for the next nine months, enjoying a Nieman fellowship at Harvard. Sitting in as acting managing editor will be James Gibney, former managing editor of the *Wilson Quarterly*. Benjamin Hulbert Sestanovich, son of senior editor Ann Hulbert, made his appearance on August 19. Associate editor Andrew Sullivan will be performing Ann's duties in the literary department for the next three months.

CAMPAIGN '88

VEEPGATE

DAN QUAYLE did to George Bush what President Reagan was expected to. Quayle overshadowed the vice president, at least from day two of the Republican National Convention through the following week. Quayle also did what Bush often does to himself. Quayle made himself the butt of jokes, both for being a lightweight and for having spent the Vietnam War in the Indiana National Guard. Mark Russell dubbed him Kemp Light (you know, Quayle is to Jack Kemp as Bud Light is to Bud). Reporters figured Bob Dole had double entendre in mind when, in nominating Quayle as Bush's running mate, he called him one of the GOP's shining new "lights." Jim Hightower, the Texas Democrat, skewered Quayle with a question, "How many National Guardsmen were at the Alamo?" Jay Leno said National Guard duty served Quayle well. "You just kind of sit around and you wait for something to happen. Hey, if that isn't training for the vice presidency, I don't know what is."

The Quayle fiasco is not a fleeting controversy. It may not be the turning point in the campaign, but it's an awfully important episode. In the best-case scenario, Bush will suffer only slightly on November 8 because of Quayle. But Bush has to make the best case happen, and that won't be easy. My guess is it's too late to dump Quayle from the ticket. "After you get Bush up defending him four or five times, you can't yank him," says John Sears, the Republican consultant. "Whatever happens, he's there." So Bush somehow has to take the focus off Quayle. Or he'll be peppered with questions about Quayle from now until election day. And Democrats, without directly attacking Quayle, will make Bush's judgment in picking him an issue.

Why did Bush pick Quayle? The answer is not that Bush was looking for a "lapdog's lapdog," as Democratic operative Mark Siegel puts it. Bush took the course of least resistance. When the other candidates were ruled out, he went with the guy that two of his senior aides were touting. This is the way campaigns often work. Of course, Bush had five months to pick a veep, having locked up the nomination on March 8. But he got cute and postponed a decision to jack up interest in the Republican convention.

EDWARD ROLLINS, who managed President Reagan's campaign in 1984, has two good rules for choosing a running mate. Bush violated both. One is never let the decision get tied up with the convention, which invariably distorts reality. The other is to pick someone who's been nationally tested. One tested candidate was Richard Thornburgh, the former Pennsylvania governor who'd just been unanimously confirmed as attorney general. Thornburgh might even bring Pennsylvania, which Bush has little chance of winning otherwise. But Thornburgh was persona non grata with conservatives, so he was out. Alan Simpson, the Wyoming senator, was unacceptable for the same reason, a pro-choice position on abortion. Dole and Kemp were out because Bush can't abide either of them, especially Dole. (Dole also vetoed Kemp by telling Bush aides that he'd have trouble supporting a Bush-Kemp ticket.) And Governor George Deukmejian of California didn't want to be picked. Bush might have insisted if he thought Deukmejian would guarantee winning California. Neither Bush nor his advisers thought this.

By process of elimination, Quayle was left. Both pollster Robert Teeter and media consultant Roger Ailes had worked in Quayle's Senate campaigns, and they spoke favorably. Teeter has talked for years about the virtue of bringing "a new generation" of Republicans into national leadership. Ailes wrote a memo outlining how Quayle would be a credible vice presidential candidate. Neither Teeter nor Ailes had enough clout to impose their man on Bush. The only fellow with that sort of influence is campaign chief James Baker, who favored Dole but didn't lobby aggressively. The Quayle decision was Bush's.

Naming Quayle on day two upset everyone's well-laid plans for the convention and the campaign, including Bush's own. Fred Malek, the former Nixon aide recruited to run the convention, had plotted the proceedings with stopwatch precision. The first day, aimed at touting the Reagan record, went off as planned. After that, the Bush crowd lost control of the story. Day two was for bashing Michael Dukakis, but Quayle got all the attention. Day three was for building up Bush, but Quayle and questions about his background held sway. Bush's speech was the centerpiece on day four, but the burgeoning Quayle story rivaled it. After that, it was all Quayle.

Bush was supposed to come out of New Orleans on a hot streak. He didn't. His speech was scintillating, but his comments on everything but Quayle were ignored for the next week. He sought to make the case that as presi-

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dent he'd build on Reagan's foundation and that Dukakis was too great a risk for the nation to take. His speech to the VFW in Chicago on August 22 made the point that gains like the INF treaty and the Iran-Iraq cease-fire wouldn't have happened if Dukakis's advice had been followed. "Thank God we didn't listen to my opponent who wanted us to finesse our responsibility to lead [in the Persian Gulf] by turning to the United Nations to put together some international fleet," he said. None of this got through. The media concentrated on Bush's vehement defense of Quayle ("he damn sure didn't burn the American flag").

Baker and Stuart Spencer, the premier GOP strategist, had to be apoplectic over the Quayle flap. Baker had been reluctant to take over the campaign, preferring to remain as treasury secretary and advise Bush from the sidelines. But Bush summoned him, and he couldn't say no. Like others who've dealt with Bush, Baker finds him stubborn and unwilling to take advice. Bush is a campaign manager's nightmare, the opposite of Reagan. Reagan was—and is—happy to do what his handlers ask.

Spencer had an ambitious scheme for making the vice presidential nominee a big help to Bush. That went up in smoke. Spencer was a top adviser to Gerald Ford in 1976 and opposed Ford's selection of Dole as running mate (Spencer recommended a woman, Anne Armstrong). He shares the widely held view that Dole may have been the cause of Ford's defeat. Spencer assembled the best group of professionals ever to run a vice presidential operation, including speechwriter Ken Khachigian, Baker protégé James Cicconi, and Mitch Daniels, the former White House political director. Spencer figured a well-run vice presidential effort could add two or three percentage points to Bush's vote. Now Spencer and Company will be delirious with joy if Quayle doesn't lose points for the ticket.

THE PRO-QUAYLE arguments trotted out by the Bush campaign haven't helped. They're negative—Quayle isn't qualified to be president just because he didn't flee to Canada during Vietnam. Attacking the press may inflame the public against Sam Donaldson, but not in favor of Quayle. True, Quayle's critics may be hypocrites. Some of them backed Edward Kennedy for president in 1980, though he's the Democratic equivalent of Quayle, a dim bulb with piles of money and a checkered past. So what? I don't think you'll hear too many Quayle partisans comparing him to Albert Gore, who matches Quayle in age and national experience. Gore is no intellectual but next to Quayle, he's Hegel. One Republican who defends Quayle is Ken Adelman, former Reagan arms control adviser. "Quayle reads books, he knows the issues, he's substantive," says Adelman.

The Bush campaign desperately needs, in Sears's words, "a device to get people to lay off Quayle." The best device is Quayle himself. Should Quayle turn out to be a spectacularly appealing campaigner, the press might ease up. Don't hold your breath. If Quayle were that good on the stump, he wouldn't be regarded as such a lightweight by his peers in Congress. Campaign skill, after all, is a trait they admire. Quayle's strong suit is supposed to be national defense, a subject he's knowledgeable on. Given the National Guard flap, this is the subject on which he has the least credibility at the moment.

An obvious step is a Ferraro-style press conference that allows reporters to exhaust their questions. Bushies aren't willing to risk this. They don't trust all of Quayle's story and they aren't confident he can sell himself. They also recoil at the analogy to Geraldine Ferraro, remembering how dreadful she was as a candidate.

Another idea, credited to Eric Breindel of the *New York Post*, is for Bush to name his Cabinet and give the press a flock of new personalities to cover. Breindel suggested Colin Powell for defense secretary and Max Kampelman for national security adviser. This might work in the short run. Todd Domke, a Republican strategist, says Bush should turn the Quayle issue to his advantage. What's important is not whether Quayle served in Vietnam or Dukakis in Korea, Bush could say. What's important is that Dukakis wanted to pul American troops out of Korea and jeopardize what American soldiers had fought for there, etc.

It's up to Bush to create a competing story. Otherwise, short of a windfall like a major Dukakis blunder, the Quayle story will linger. "By mid-September, the press will be writing stories about places Quayle won't go" because GOP candidates don't want him around, says Sears. Bush will be one of those candidates.

FRED BARNES

POSTCARD WEST BERLIN

PLATZKRIEG

ON JULY 1 West Berlin police set off the first mass flight into the arms of totalitarianism in the history of that divided city.

What sparked more than 100 West Berliners to climb over the wall to the Communist East was a dispute over the fate of the Lené Dreieck, 40,000 square meters of mud and shrubs directly bordering the wall in the one-time center of pre-war Berlin. In the 1920s this area near the Potsdamer Platz was one of the most frenzied parts of Berlin, with packed cafés that housed much of the literary community in winters when coal was short. Nearby was the bunker where Hitler took his life on April 30, 1945. Technically a part of the Soviet sector, the razed, overgrown area was one of the many chunks of land that the masons of East Berlin didn't manage to wrap in when the wall went up on August 13, 1961. Like leftover pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, the bits lay unclaimed and unused until a land barter deal earlier this year between East and West.

The land was not scheduled to change hands officially until July 1. But before West Berlin's city fathers could

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even dust off their plans for a superhighway on the site, a motley group of West Berlin ecologists and anarchists "occupied" the Lené Dreieck. Declaring the area to be a "liberated zone," dreamy-eyed hippies, ragged punks, and assorted others with time on their hands erected a small village of tents and huts. The West Berlin police were forbidden by law from entering East German territory. The East German border guards, after a few hails over the wall, decided to let the settlers remain. And so the village grew, the citizens of no man's land bathed naked in the sun, and the tourist hordes that came daily to peer over the wall were treated to a new attraction.

If there is anything the West Berlin police don't like, it's the thought of an area beyond the reach of the law. During the early 1980s, efforts by the police to dislodge illegal squatters from their homes led to week-long riots. Since then the police have vigorously maintained the "Berlin Line," clearing any occupied buildings or streets without hesitation, using whatever force is required. Last year the city created special squads for just that task, picked out for their physical size and fierceness and armed with four-foot-long clubs. Caught up in the heat of the chase during a demonstration last May, they cudgeled anyone within club's reach, including journalists and some of their own officers. Now the riot troops posted around the encampment were forced to look on helplessly as their arch enemies, the "*Chaoten*" (chaotic), painted "Cop-Free Zone" and "anarchy is possible" on the wall and hurled curses, spit, and occasional beer bottles in their direction.

BUT THE ecologist-anarchist front was experiencing its own inner angst, having split into two factions known as "Müslies" (after an indigestible mixture of grain and corn they liked to eat with milk for breakfast) and "Mollies" (after the Molotov cocktails they liked to heave at policemen). The Müslies sport long hair, beards, heavy wool clothing, and Birkenstock sandals, and like to count the species of plant life in abandoned lots and quote pantheistic poetry. The Mollies prefer proto-military boots and pants, shaved and dyed patterns of hair on their skulls, and black leather jackets with stenciled slogans like "Eat-Fuck-Kill." While the Müslies wanted to negotiate a settlement with the authorities and win popular support, the Mollies took to wearing face masks at all hours of the day to prevent identification, carried wooden clubs over their shoulders, and stockpiled projectiles for the eventual confrontation. When the Müslies questioned their commitment to ecological issues, they replied, "The world is going to hell no matter what we do, at least we want to have some action!" Factional strife threatened to destroy the fragile alliance until someone arrived at a novel alternative: Rather than fight or surrender, why not jump the wall?

A brilliant inspiration that begged a few technical questions. People who cross the wall from East to West tend to get shot or blown up. Would the border guards from the East be any friendlier to those coming from West to East? And once you get in, can you get back out? The GDR soldiers peering down at the village plenum offered no clues.

As the Prussian dusk faded to darkness on the night of June 29, the eve of the formal *Anschluss*, the curious and sympathetic had swollen the crowd at the Dreieck to over a thousand. The whole-grain families with their barefoot, shaggy-haired children had largely disappeared. Their leather-jacketed comrades appeared to have invested the gains of a day's panhandling in cases of beer, firing their courage for the coming battle, and listing precariously as they moved through the crowd. An atypically eloquent demonstrator mounted a propaganda offensive with a megaphone, demanding immediate negotiations and comparing the special riot division to the SA and the SS. After about half an hour of harangue the police bullhorn finally crackled: "Please report your bullshit in another direction."

At midnight the mob fell silent. Every ear strained for the sound of approaching sirens. When the Valkyries failed to descend, the crowd found other means to release their combative energies. A bonfire filled the square with flickering light. To the beat of drums and a trash container of galvanized steel struck with bricks and metal rods, bodies broke into dance. Ares had vanished and Dionysus had descended.

IT WAS, needless to say, merely a strategic delay on the police's part. At 5 a.m., after allowing most of the crowd to stagger home or sink into dreams of anarchistic utopia, and with the necessary *Dämmerung* to enable photographic records of any who attempted to resist, 800 green-clad policemen in full riot gear descended on the sleepy village. The remaining demonstrators groggily retreated to the nine-foot strip of land at the edge of the wall that still belonged to East Germany. The police advanced without the slightest resistance. Defeat seemed inevitable.

Suddenly a woman perched on the coping of the wall turned from speaking with a border guard and announced, "It's fine. They say that we can all come over." Within a few minutes 180 demonstrators had scaled up makeshift ladders and upturned sections of police fencing and clambered into the waiting East German military wagons on the other side of the wall. Those who sought "temporary asylum" were treated to a large breakfast of sandwiches and tea, politely asked if they would like to take up permanent residence in the socialist system (an offer that no one accepted), and then allowed to filter back into the West in small groups at various border crossings.

The outcome seemed to please all concerned. Christian Democrat Senator Kewenig could fluff his feathers in front of a captured hoard of bottles and slingshot ammunition and reproach the East Germans for neglecting their responsibilities as "decent businessmen" to turn over a clean parcel of land. The Communist Party broadsheet *Neues Deutschland* managed to publish a heartrending account of the flight without once mentioning the wall itself. Of the breakfast scene the correspondent wrote, "One had a warm feeling in the stomach. Even when one knew that the village of huts would soon be ripped down. But one had won new friends. And new comrades . . ." The West German police union urged the *Chaoten* to remain in the East.

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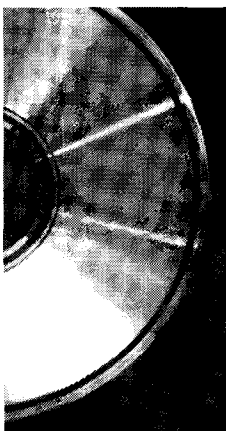

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Even the demonstrators seemed satisfied. They returned as heroes, having dealt the "police state" (West Berlin) a monumental black eye and proved that it is possible, at least this once, to visit East Berlin for the day without the customary currency exchange.

CROCKER COULSON

Crocker Coulson is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

The competence craze.

CAN-DO CANT

AT THE Democratic convention in Atlanta, Michael Dukakis grandly announced that "this election isn't about ideology. It's about competence." The distinction went over well with much of the public and the press. But so did George Bush's riposte at the Republican convention. "Competence is the creed of the technocrat who makes sure the gears mesh but doesn't for a second understand the machine," declared the vice president. "This election is about the beliefs we share, the values we honor, the principles we hold dear." Bush's handling of "the vision thing," a.k.a. ideology, won him big points. Who's right? The answer is neither. Both convention statements say more about the sorry state of ideology in American politics than about any fundamental differences between the two candidates.

In America the term "ideology," once a respectable concept involving a society's dominant values, fell into disrepute with the exhaustion of the old left and the onset of the cold war. In the '50s ideology came to be perceived as something alien and radical, abstract and cerebral, utopian and unrealizable. It is the "genius" of American politics, the historian Daniel J. Boorstin insisted, that Americans have no need of ideology. He asserted that the Founders believed the Republic need not rely upon a body of political ideas. Like many other ex-radicals, Boorstin was associating ideology with European communism and the doctrines of the left.

In his speech in Atlanta, Dukakis stood Boorstin's prejudice on its head by reassociating ideology with the Republican right, and pragmatic prudence—or competence—with the Democratic center:

> I don't think I have to tell you how much we Americans expect of ourselves or how much we have a right to expect from those we elect to public office.
>
> Because this election isn't about ideology. It's about competence. It's not about overthrowing government in Central America; it's about creating good jobs in middle America.

Heartfelt sentiment, but flawed logic. Why should an objective in Central America be considered ideological and one in middle America considered a matter of competence? Any celebration of the criterion of competence clouds rather than clarifies the issues. The term itself is elusive and relative, implying little more than the possession of requisite abilities for a particular task. Competence is pure technique, a rationale so self-sufficient it need not specify the ends and values it is to serve.

One wonders, for example, how the Reagan administration can be judged against the standard of competence. Were the American people outraged by the Irangate affair simply because the negotiations between the United States and Iran were incompetently handled? Colonel North was nothing if not competent in handling questions with a cleverness that paraded as innocence. A consummate performance. The public was shocked by Irangate not because its performers bungled their role. After the administration urged other nations not to negotiate with terrorists whatever the costs, Americans discovered that this administration had been doing it all along. The public reacted not to a lack of skill and proficiency but to revelations of deceit and hypocrisy. It was an ideological reaction by a people who felt that such values as honesty and trust had been violated.

The truth is that American political leaders have always invoked values and ideals that told Americans what the Republic stood for and why. Contrary to Boorstin's assertions, more recent historians have uncovered considerable evidence that the Founders were steeped in the philosophies of the Scottish Enlightenment, Classical Republicanism, and Calvinism—schools of thought that gave Americans what philosopher George Santayana felt they desperately needed: "an agonized conscience." For Jefferson, ideology was embodied in liberty and the pursuit of happiness; for Lincoln, in equality and Christian sacrifice; for FDR, in social justice and the welfare state; for JFK, in commitment and government as public service ("Ask not . . .") rather than private interests. All such positions were ideological in that they invoked higher ends and ultimate values that had more to do with political morality than administrative efficiency.

Few presidents in recent years have been so ideologically driven as Ronald Reagan. In foreign affairs especially, Reagan has harkened back to the ideological passions of Woodrow Wilson. Both leaders got teary when they spoke of global democracy, and both referred to the Soviet Union in feverish religious terms. If debacles such as Irangate are among the failures of the Reagan revolution, they are failures of ideology, not competence.

Ironically enough, it now falls to George Bush, the tireless technocrat and résumé builder, to rescue that ideology. Yet stripped of its joke lines, statistics, and Pledge of Allegiance, Bush's celebrated speech reads more like a laundry list of beliefs and values than a coherent political philosophy. The Founders could perhaps remind Bush that questions of ideology can't be papered over by pandering to the people's pretensions of goodness and virtue.

Dukakis's advisers seem to believe that "competency" is a value-free term that will save the Democratic Party from the sin of "ideology." The distinction between competence and ideology holds only if one believes that winning—and not necessarily governing, leading, and educating—is what

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politics is all about. But if competence becomes an end in itself, then politics is no longer educative, and loses its power to remind us that we are ideological creatures with diverse values and goals that are often at cross-purposes.

JOHN PATRICK DIGGINS

John Patrick Diggins is professor of history at the University of California, Irvine. His book on the 1940s and 50s, *The Proud Decades*, will be published by W. W. Norton later this year.

Dan Quayle, one of us.

FRONT-MAN

THE BUSH-QUAYLE ticket is a powerful symbol of the moral decline of the American ruling class. Consider the response of each half of this generationally balanced ticket to its generation's war.

In 1941 George Herbert Walker Bush, scion of a rich and politically influential family, was a 17-year-old senior at a prestigious New England prep school. A secure and idyllic childhood, spent in the bosky suburban towns of Milton, Massachusetts, and Greenwich, Connecticut, and in summerhouses and sailboats on the Maine coast, was behind him. An equally secure future beckoned, first at Yale and afterward in some appropriate branch of business. Then his country called—but let Bush (and Vic Gold) take up the story, as told in Bush's autobiography, *Looking Forward*:

> When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, December 7, 1941, there wasn't any doubt about which branch of the service I'd join. My thoughts immediately turned to naval aviation. College was coming up the following fall, but that would have to wait. The sooner I could enlist, the better.
>
> Six months later I got my diploma from Phillips Academy Andover. Secretary of War Henry Stimson came from Washington to deliver the commencement address. He told members of our graduating class the war would be a long one, and even though America needed fighting men, we'd serve our country better by getting more education before getting into uniform.
>
> After the ceremony, in a crowded hallway outside the auditorium, my father had one last question about my future plans. . . . "George," he said, "did the secretary say anything to change your mind?"
>
> "No, sir," I replied. "I'm going in."
>
> Dad nodded and shook my hand.

In that exchange, so long ago, between Prescott and George Bush, there is real nobility; it is a perfect expression of the upper-class ethos at its tight-lipped, firm-jawed best. These were not people brought up to talk endlessly, or at all, about their "feelings." A nod and a handshake were more than sufficient to convey the father's pride in the son. With that handshake the boy be-

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came a man; and the man went on, as the world knows, to become the youngest aviator in the Navy, flying 58 combat missions off the pitching decks of aircraft carriers, getting shot down in his TBM Avenger and rescued at sea by an American submarine, and coming home with the Distinguished Flying Cross on his chest. He need not have left home at all. A word from Prescott Bush to Secretary Stimson or some other highly placed acquaintance, and George might have had a comfortable billet in the Pentagon or as an adjutant on some general's staff behind the lines. But that was not his way, or the way of his class. "War," writes Nelson W. Aldrich Jr. in *Old Money: The Mythology of America's Upper Class*, "is the ultimate in the series of ordeals, beginning at boarding school, going on through the trial by nature, through which the Old Rich discover their personal powers and enter at last into the line of descent and succession that marks their place in time." George Bush entered into that line, and it would take him to the threshold of the White House.

NOW FLASH FORWARD to 1969. J. Danforth Quayle, scion of a rich and politically influential family, has a problem. Like millions of others, he has held off the draft for four years with a Selective Service rating of 2-S— a student deferment. But now he has graduated, from DePauw University, and because his grades weren't so good it's going to take some doing to get him into law school. Meanwhile, he has had his physical examination, the last step before the machinery of Selective Service will grind out his induction notice. He applies for a spot in the National Guard, as the state militia is called, but the demand for places is so great that he will have long since been drafted if he waits his turn. Fortunately, a senior employee at one of the family's newspapers is a retired major general in the Guard. Telephone calls are made. A spot is found. Quayle is inconvenienced: he has to spend six months in training, and for five-and-a-half years after that he has to spend one weekend each month and two weeks each summer at meetings. But he is out of danger. The 120th Public Information Detachment of the Indiana National Guard is not a hell-for-leather outfit, and anyway the chances that it or any other unit of the militia will be activated for duty in Vietnam are close to zero. On paper Quayle "served his country," as we have been told so often in recent days; in reality he served himself.

So did a lot of other people, of course. On the exquisitely calibrated moral scale of that period, Quayle fell somewhere in the middle. The aristocrats were the fighters and the resisters—those who volunteered for combat duty and sometimes lost their lives in the war, and those who chose to go to prison to demonstrate their opposition to it. In the second rank were the draftees and the COs—those who accepted induction and obeyed orders, even if that meant going into combat (which in the majority of cases it did not), and those who, in obedience to religious conscience, did alternative service in hospitals or nursing homes. In the third rank were the joiners and the exiles—those who, like Quayle, signed up with some branch of the service in a way that guaranteed they could discharge their military obligation without incurring physical risk, and those who moved to Canada or Sweden, placing themselves beyond the reach of army or jail but sacrificing home, and sometimes career and relations with friends and family, in the process. The fourth rank were the evaders—those who arranged their lives to correspond with one of the categories exempt from the draft. (Graduate school, marriage with children, and civilian defense work were the most common ploys.) Bringing up the rear were those who faked or exaggerated physical or mental infirmities with enough success to obtain 1-Y status (a temporary medical deferment) or, best of all, the coveted 4-F. Only those in this final category truly deserved the name of draft dodger. Outside this scheme of moral ranking were the genuine 4-F's with true medical disabilities.

I'M NOT RUNNING for vice president, but since I'm judging people who are, full disclosure is in order. By the end of 1966 I had held off Uncle Sam for five years, first by going to college and then by working for the National Student Association, which was mysteriously able to shelter its staff from the draft. (The mystery was cleared up in 1967, when it was disclosed that the CIA, which was secretly funding the NSA, would simply request one's file from one's local draft board and sit on it.) I'd quit NSA to work for *Newsweek*, my draft status was 1-A, and certain induction was only weeks away. I was too straight to malinger and too glad to be out of school to want to go back; and I doubted that my opposition to the Vietnam War was single-minded enough to sustain me through a jail term. So I joined the Navy for a three-year hitch. After Officer Candidate School I requested assignment to Vietnam (where I would have been in no great danger—my specialty, like Quayle's, was "public information"), but with typical military logic I was given a desk job in Manhattan.

After a year and a half in the passionately anti-war atmosphere of Greenwich Village, I decided I was a conscientious objector after all and applied for discharge as such. My application was long (25,000 words) and earnest, containing what I considered an ingenious and convincing plan for the nonviolent national defense of the United States. My commanding officer, Vice Admiral Andrew Jackson, was sympathetic, but the Navy Department wasn't buying. Instead of a discharge they sent me my long-deferred orders to Vietnam. I politely announced my intention to disobey, and looked forward to a court-martial and fame as an anti-war hero. It was not to be. A friend from the office who was a former guard at Portsmouth Naval Prison, where I was expecting to finish out my military career, strongly advised me to have any pending dental work done before rather than during my stay at Portsmouth. (He cautioned that the prison dentists' sole remedy, no matter what the complaint, was extraction.) I followed this advice, bled more spectacularly from the procedure than I should have, was found to have a mild clotting-factor deficiency, and was returned, with breathtaking speed, to civilian life. In sum, I was an evader turned joiner turned CO whose ambition to be a resister was

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frustrated by the fact that he'd been 4-F from day one.

How one served or didn't was not the only variable in the moral calculus of the time. There was also where one stood on the war, and how one's actions comported with one's words. Many a draft evader or dodger partially redeemed himself by participating in the movement to end the war, sometimes running real risks (though of course of a much lower order than the risks to which combat troops exposed themselves) in the process. Such men also "served their country." The Quayle, however, was one of the most irritating species in the aviary, the "chicken hawk" who cawed loudly in support of the war while fluttering far from the theater of combat. The anti-war equivalent was the saber-toothed dove, the draft dodger who jeered at soldiers and sailors. (Strolling in uniform around Sheridan or Harvard Square, I was often the object of unsolicited abuse from birds of this type. My policy was to inquire about the Selective Service status of my tormentor. If the answer was 1-A, or the person was out on bail for draft resistance, I'd nod or try to engage him in conversation. If the answer was 2-S or 1-Y, I'd tell the son of a bitch to fuck off.)

In the hours following his selection as Bush's running mate, Quayle all but acknowledged the moral ambiguity of his position, saying he chose as he did because he wanted to go to law school and get on with his career, and adding, with coarse candor, that "I did not know in 1969 that I would be in this room today, I'll confess." By the time he gave his acceptance speech (in which he identified the Republican themes as "Freedom, Family, and Future"—a fourth F and he wouldn't have had to join the Guard), the line had changed. Now he was "proud" of what he did.

FORE!

Never mind that Dan Quayle's résumé is thin on leadership experience, intellectual achievement, legislative accomplishment, and battlefield valor. As a world-class golfer and seasoned party-goer, this man is ready to be vice president.

Quayle has been training for his role since adolescence. Some of the earliest evidence about his social development comes from his brethren of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity at DePauw University. DePauw prides itself on its reputation for building leadership qualities, according to Jane Funke, the college's public relations director. One way it does this, she said, is by encouraging the proliferation of fraternities and clubs: the more clubs, the more leaders.

Delta Kappa Epsilon was known for its leadership in one particular field. "We were the Animal House," recalled Jon Socolofsky, one of Quayle's former Delta brothers and now a Chicago banker. Dan Quayle was "one of the guys. He was a social leader. A lot of fun to be with." William Massie, one of Quayle's former roommates, corroborated this account. Massie, now a hospital administrator in Lexington, Kentucky, said that Delta House did have a louche reputation on campus, although he claimed that "often people would exaggerate about what went on." Whatever effect the partying may have had on Quayle's academic performance, which was mediocre to poor, it was not allowed to distract from golf. Quayle was captain of the DePauw varsity.

During his now famous tour of duty in the Indiana National Guard, for much of his time Quayle was assigned as a feature writer on the *Indiana Guardsman*, a house organ. Parties were the order of the day. Jim Gillespie, one of Quayle's contemporaries and now a reporter for the *Indianapolis Star*, who bravely refused an offer of anonymity (the paper is owned by Quayle's family), said that the office's operations were characterized by lots of liquor and "good conversation about women."

The social skills that Quayle acquired in the Guard have served him well in the Senate, where his whirlwind schedule would have sapped the strength of a lesser man. Winter is Quayle's most arduous season. He spends much of it in locations known more as playgrounds than as hotbeds of legislative activity—especially for a senator from Indiana. In 1982 he and his wife first went to Hawaii from February 14 to 19 for an important expenses-paid meeting with the American Steel Distributors. On April 4 and 5 the Independent Bakers Association flew him to Palm Beach and Louisville. A week later Northrop Corporation flew him to Los Angeles, and Rockwell International flew him back.

The next winter was busier still. Between January 6 and 9, Quayle had to travel to Orlando to commune with the American Medical Association. On January 17 General Dynamics flew him out to San Diego, and on January 19 Lockheed flew him back. On January 30 and 31 he made a round-trip to Phoenix on the tab of the Sugar Users lobby. Between February 26 and 28 there was a Magnavox meeting in Miami, and between April 16 and 18 there was another round-trip to Los Angeles at the expense of something called Target Inc.

But despite the helter-skelter life of a legislator on the go, Quayle still finds time to squeeze in three golf games a week. In 1987, for example, one of his expenses-paid trips was to Monterey, California, site of the Pebble Beach golf course (at the invitation of AT&T). Since 1982 Quayle has also regularly accepted gifts from golfing promoters. In 1982, 1983, 1984, and 1987 he accepted "golf merchandise" worth more than $200 from the promoters of Washington's Kemper Open. In 1983 he also accepted $100 worth of merchandise from organizers of the Vince Lombardi Charity Tournament. Last year he and his wife each accepted "less than" $100 worth of golf clothes from AT&T during their visit to Pebble Beach, and Quayle accepted $825 worth of golfing paraphernalia from fellow Hoosier Fuzzy Zoeller, a professional golf star.

Dan Quayle's critics may have overlooked his greatest strength. The man whom George Bush picked as his running mate may not have the highest IQ or the most experience, but he definitely has one of the lowest golf handicaps.

MARK HOSENBALL

Mark Hosenball is a Washington reporter for the *Sunday Times* of London.

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Quayle's problem is that he has no really good answer to the questions that are being raised. But both he and the country would be better off if he would say something like, "The choice I made 20 years ago was not a dishonorable one, but I'm not especially proud of it either. It takes nothing away from the respect and gratitude we owe to those who fought and died to say that it was a wrenching time for all Americans, and particularly for young men of my generation. I've learned a lot since then, and our country has come a long way toward healing the wounds of that terrible time. I want that healing to continue. I hope that in the end this controversy will help that process along, not retard it."

Of course, that's a bit long for a ten-second sound bite, and in any case the Republicans have chosen another route: demagogic, defensive anger. Speaking before the Veterans of Foreign Wars, George Bush said of Quayle, "He did not go to Canada, he did not burn his draft card, and he damn sure didn't burn the American flag." More's the pity; those who did do such things, twisted, bitter, and self-defeating though their actions sometimes (not always) were, at least acted from motives higher than individual convenience. Quayle made a separate peace; now Bush proposes to refight the war. *Aux armes, citoyens.*

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

His only legislative achievement.

QUAYLE'S EGG

ASKED WHAT substantive legislative accomplishment he can point to after four years in the House and eight years in the Senate, Dan Quayle has but one: the 1982 Job Training Partnership Act. Quayle praised himself in his New Orleans acceptance speech for this federal job subsidy program even as he denounced its co-author, Senator Edward Kennedy, as big-government liberalism incarnate.

JTPA replaced "CETA," the notoriously wasteful federal jobs program of the 1970s that featured programs like building artificial rocks for rock climbers to practice on. The $3 billion-a-year JTPA is a 1980s-style program: it is supposed to demonstrate the possibilities for government-business cooperation. But the reality in Quayle's own state of Indiana shows that JTPA is nothing but welfare for corporations and public service agencies.

In line with orthodox Republican thought, JTPA is administered through the states. It does not create jobs so much as shift them around. JTPA gave $600,000 to a company moving 140 jobs from a factory just north of the Indiana-Michigan state line to a site just south of it. The Shenango Company, a foundry operation in Dover, Ohio, is closing down its union plant in Ohio and relocating in Terre Haute, Indiana, with $100,000 in job training help from JTPA. Hebrew National Kosher Foods Inc. became mired in a labor dispute in Queens, New York, shifted its operation to Indianapolis, and received JTPA funds to train 49 new workers. Arvin Industries is closing down factories employing 1,140 people in Greenwood and Franklin, Indiana, and—with $2.5 million from JTPA—is setting up a new factory employing 200 people in conjunction with a Japanese partner in Madison, Indiana. As Tim Kelley, an Indiana Employment and Training Services employee and former president of AFSCME Local 397, observes, "If you're a business, you can either rob banks or threaten to move your plant—you get money either way."

IN SEVERAL CASES JTPA not only paid companies to train workers at the new location, but also provided "dislocated worker assistance" to workers laid off at the old location—such as $525,000 in federal job aid for laid-off Arvin workers. This is a "cat-chasing-its-tail" model of economic development.

JTPA is spending a modest $8 million to train new employees for a Subaru plant in Lafayette, Indiana. JTPA funds are being spent for flying Indianans to Japan for special training, and for teaching Japanese English so that they can train American employees. The huge JTPA expenditure for Subaru has caused a shortfall in other job-training funds in the Lafayette area, resulting in sharp cutbacks in programs to teach remedial reading to low-income adults. The state of Indiana also gave $267,000 to Subaru for a special executive search to find a U.S. executive for the Subaru plant.

JTPA funds are being used to train employees for other Japanese joint-venture projects in Indiana. If the Japanese government were paying for the job-training costs of Japanese companies, members of Congress would scream "unfair trade!" Yet apparently it is OK for U.S. taxpayers to pay for job-training costs of Japanese-owned corporations.

Many companies are getting federal dollars for in-house "customized training" of newly hired workers. But many of these "trainees" are already experts in their occupation. A new supermarket in Tell City, Indiana, spent JTPA funds to "train" former Kroger's supermarket employees—including a few with over 30 years' experience in the business. The Terre Haute *Tribune-Star* recently reported complaints by several JTPA trainees that their training was a waste of time. One said: "How much on-the-job training does it take to do [his task]? I could show my ten-year-old kid, and he could do it."

The most colorful JTPA boondoggle is a category called "employment-generating activities"—spending federal money on activities that are supposed to create new jobs. In Peru, Indiana, the local private industry council spent $5,000 to help start up a circus museum—claiming that a circus museum would attract tourists, and thereby create jobs. JTPA funds paid more than $15,000 for the mayor of Brazil, Indiana, and his son to travel to Japan fishing for new investors. JTPA funds even paid for the mayor's gifts to Japanese businessmen. The Western Indiana Private Indus-

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try Corporation spent $12,000 on a feasibility study to set up a prep school for Japanese students. JTPA recently sent Mayor J. Mark Lawyer of Anderson, Indiana, to Sweden.

Jobworks Incorporated in Fort Wayne is paying a consultant $86,000 a year to help local businesses win federal contracts. This is wonderful: using federal tax dollars to snare more federal tax dollars for Indiana. Many local "private industry councils" are using JTPA money to advertise in *Forbes*, *Fortune*, and *Business Week* to attract businesses to their area (in competition, of course, against all the other JTPA-financed private industry councils).

In some states, government agencies are making huge profits off of JTPA contracts and using the bounty to finance new government office buildings, according to a confidential November 18, 1987, memo by Labor Department Assistant Secretary Roger Semerad. Federal and state governments have made little effort to ensure sound contracting procedures under JTPA. A December 7, 1987, confidential Indiana audit on JTPA grants in East Central Indiana concluded, "There was no analysis of the price charged to determine if it was reasonable, and all contracts lack emphasis on training-related placements." One $3 million JTPA contract "did not contain a budget or financial breakdown nor a description of activities to be performed." The grant recipient, Community and Family Services of Portland, Indiana, apparently had set up its own load fund to recycle the large profits it made off of JTPA contracts.

As with all such giveaway programs, stories of loose bookkeeping and fiscal abuses abound. And stories of actual corruption are starting to sprout as well. In neighboring Ohio, a Cleveland *Plain Dealer* investigation revealed that Governor Richard Celeste's operatives had directed $1.7 million in JTPA contracts to contributors to Celeste's campaign, including some grants that state JTPA authorities derided as "worthless."

So much for Quayle's legislative record. JTPA is nothing to brag about.

JAMES BOVARD

James Bovard is a policy analyst for the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

The new politics of deafness.

HEARING AID

WHEN DEAF STUDENTS at Gallaudet University went on strike last March, George Bush swung into action. "I have a deep interest in disability civil rights," he wrote them on the eve of the five-day protest that forced the Gallaudet board of trustees to install a deaf president. "And my office has served as the focal point for the development of the administration's disability policy."

Never mind that the Reagan administration has been hacking away at disability programs for the past eight years. Since last March converts to the cause of the deaf and disabled have come from all corners, from homeless activist Mitch Snyder and the American Postal Workers Union to the White House. When Dr. King Jordan, the new Gallaudet president, went to Congress to push for his university's annual appropriation, about $67 million, he got a larger increase than any other disability program. Senators glad-handed Jordan in the hallway, and at a conference in South Carolina, one even addressed him as "his majesty." Judging from the slew of bills now pending in Congress, he was only half joking. New legislation that would benefit the deaf includes individual tax breaks, a study of visual fire alarms, and a long-distance phone service that would allow the deaf to hold phone conversations with the hearing. Most significant, however, is a proposed overhaul of anti-discrimination laws that would extend the monumental Civil Rights Act of 1964 to the disabled and would build new protections for them into every job, government service, and advisory board.

The new activism is couched in the language of Selma, right down to the "We Still Have a Dream" banner loaned to Gallaudet students for one of their marches by the Crispus Attucks museum. Politicians and deaf leaders alike invoke the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence, and taxpayers' rights to usher in reforms. "Now is our time," Republican Senator John McCain told a group of deaf leaders. "I look forward to the opportunity of working with you—not providing benefits or privileges—but providing the equal opportunity which is owed, an obligation to all citizens."

FOR ALL THE high-minded talk, the deaf uprising is not a rerun of the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and '70s, and it is a mistake to treat it that way. Like ethnic minorities or women, the deaf—an organized minority of some two million—have faced entrenched discrimination and prejudice. During the 1940s and '50s, for example, deaf children were punished, and their teachers fired, for using sign language in school. But the similarities stop there. The sudden attention to the civil rights of the disabled masks what many of their demands are: requests for far-reaching new entitlements. Worthy perhaps, but entitlements all the same. As right as the rhetoric sounds, it doesn't make sense, and may actually end up hurting the disabled.

Consider civil rights reform. Congress is mulling over the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1988, which would extend to the disabled, including the deaf, the anti-discrimination protections of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The 1964 act outlaws employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin—all immutable characteristics of birth that belong to an identifiable minority. As the laws now stand, employers don't have to ignore all characteristics of birth, only those that have nothing to do with work fitness. Imagine a spectrum. At one end are immutable characteristics that are never related in and of themselves to a person's ability to

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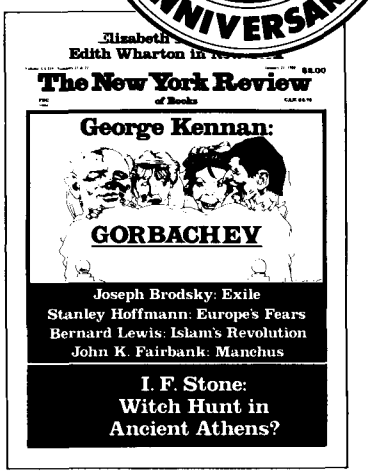

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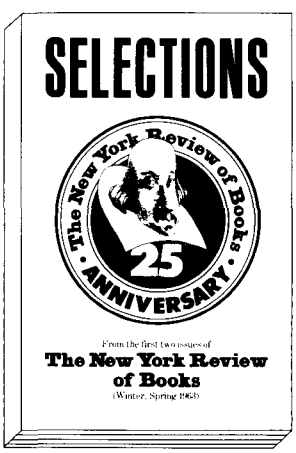

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work: race, national origin, and sex. Discrimination on these bases is properly barred. Arguably citizenship, marital status, and sexual orientation are of a similar ilk. At the other end of the spectrum fall certain characteristics that, although perhaps largely hereditary, *are* considered relevant to hiring and promotion: intelligence and drive, for example. No one suggests anti-discrimination laws for the less intelligent, if such a group could be identified, or the listless. Even if these characteristics were found to be hereditary, implementing laws to enforce such radical egalitarianism would entail huge economic costs.

Physical disabilities fall somewhere between the two poles. For some jobs, a physical disability is no handicap. Many people missing limbs or lacking mobility can work well in a service economy. Their disability deserves to be regarded no differently than their race or national origin. But the ability to see and hear is still essential for most jobs. Like reduced intelligence, diminished senses are often an occupational drawback. Enacting an expansive law that bars *all* disability discrimination would be to deny that the disabled are often held back by *both* discrimination and inherent physical disadvantage. Elimination of simple prejudice, a laudable goal in keeping with the civil rights tradition, will still leave many disabled people far short of the ideal of equal opportunity.

THE 1964 LAW forbidding discrimination had a narrow exception. It allowed employers to consider religion, sex, or national origin if any one of them was an essential, "bona fide occupational qualification"—say, in the case of casting a movie part. The 1988 law would forbid discrimination on the basis of handicap, and has a similar exception: one can consider a handicap if it is "substantially related to the ability to perform" essential job tasks. Thus, someone hiring a newscaster may consider the ability to hear. But because the capacity to see, hear, and move about freely is still central to many jobs, and thus would exempt most employment situations from the new law, the 1988 act says that an employer must make "reasonable accommodation" for the disabled by adjusting work qualifications, rearranging offices, and otherwise helping the disabled to fit in. Failure to do so would constitute discrimination.

"Reasonable accommodation" means affirmative action, not simple anti-discrimination. The 1988 act asks not only that the employer banish prejudice from his or her mind, but also that he or she adjust job standards to give the disabled as a group a special break. The disabled would welcome such a reform, and it might well be an enlightened path to take, but it promises a qualitatively different form of affirmative action, one that goes well beyond the advantages granted to ethnic minorities.

Affirmative action for ethnic minorities is supposed to be a short-run program with long-run benefits. Sooner or later, the argument goes, the advantages offered by affirmative action will enable groups victimized by past discrimination to succeed in society without any special help. That won't happen in the case of the deaf. In economic terms, the societal cost of affirmative action for the deaf will always be with us.

The rhetoric of equal access poses other problems as well. Take deaf education, for example. Many parents want their deaf children educated in regular public schools. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 was designed to encourage just that, and since its passage there has been a dramatic shift. In 1978, 33 percent of deaf children were educated in regular schools; now 53 percent are. "Mainstreaming" has been heralded as a cost-saver. It embodies the ideal of equal opportunity, following the integration model of ethnic minorities. It's also a failure. There aren't enough trained interpreters and counselors in the public schools to give the deaf an education comparable to that of their hearing classmates. The average deaf 17-year-old still reads at a fourth-grade level. Most deaf people now reject mainstreaming, so much so that it has literally become a dirty word: the sign for "mainstream" has hands flowing together like tributaries, with one hand dropping down to signify that the "mainstreamed" deaf child has been left to drown.

LIKE ANY ethnic minority that has had to overcome discrimination and prejudice, the deaf have a deserved pride in their accomplishments. As they proved at Gallaudet, that pride can be useful. But in its most militant form, it can also backfire. When Congress set out to establish a new research institute designed to spot deafness early and seek prevention and cure, some deaf activists complained that since Congress isn't trying to cure ethnicity, why should it try to cure deafness? "If I had a bulldozer and a gun," said Jerry Covell, one of the Gallaudet student leaders, "I would destroy all scientific experiments to cure deafness. If I could hear, I would probably take a pencil and poke myself to be deaf again." In Covell's world, no attempt would be made to cure deafness; we would just pile up program after federal program to help the deaf.

America could do better by its 36 million disabled citizens. Although the federal government currently spends about $60 billion a year on the disabled (including $200 million on deafness alone for university grants, TV captioning, and research), their daily lives are still filled with obstacles. Three-quarters of all urban rail systems aren't accessible to those in a wheelchair, two-thirds of all network TV programming is not captioned for the deaf, and mechanical aids remain prohibitively expensive. At issue is not whether Washington should find more ways to help the deaf. It should. But the right approach doesn't lie in redefining them as another ethnic minority, complete with mandated quotas and the other trappings of affirmative action. Through tax incentives, educational efforts, and other discretionary legislation, the government can encourage, but not enforce, equal access to *all* jobs and services for the deaf. It may never be able to make the deaf hear, but it can make them heard.

TOWNSEND DAVIS

Townsend Davis is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

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A left-wing economic cure-all.

UNCLE BOB'S ALL-PURPOSE TONIC

BY ROBERT KUTTNER

THE ISSUE OF long-term care for the elderly has forced its way onto the national agenda. The logic of social insurance to pay for nursing care and home care is very persuasive. But the cause is seemingly hopeless because of the familiar fiscal litany: Balancing the budget must take priority. Entitlements should be cut, not expanded. Old folks already get more than their fair share. Economic health requires a higher private savings rate before we contemplate additional social outlay. And so on.

The savings rate argument is especially persuasive, since it is undeniable that the savings rates of nations are closely correlated to their rates of economic growth, and the United States has long had the lowest savings rate among the advanced economies. It declined from 7.1 percent in 1980 to just 3.7 percent last year.

Yet surprisingly, the very demand for a costly new social program opens the door to a fundamentally different way of financing social spending that would help the savings rate and the larger economy at the same time. The idea, paradoxically, is to use social insurance as a source of net savings for the economy. Like Social Security, which is now in surplus, a new social insurance program for long-term care could deliberately build up reserves, just as if it were a private insurance plan. The reserves would add to the economy's rate of savings. The same effect could be achieved through a major reform of private pensions—extending them to all employees and bringing them under more consistent public control. The common thread in both proposals is the idea that adequate money for America's collective retirement should be set aside in advance, raising the quality of services and the rate of collective savings simultaneously.

Of the various institutions that provide income and services for retirement—Social Security pensions, private pensions, Medicare, funds for nursing home care—only private pensions have served as a source of true savings, by building up funds sufficient to pay future claims. By contrast, the public pieces of the retirement system—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid (which pays for nursing home care)—have been operated as "pay-as-you-go" programs. Current taxes on today's working people finance current benefits paid out to today's retired people. No accumulation of savings takes place.

However, the 1983 restructuring of Social Security set in motion a far-reaching change by deliberately building up a surplus in the Social Security accounts. The surplus, projected to peak in 2020 at $12 trillion, was devised in order to anticipate the greater-than-normal drain on Social Security that will occur when the baby boom generation begins retiring. Thus, for the first time under Social Security, working-age people will be paying at least part of their own retirement costs in advance, just as if they were putting money in the bank. And the existence of a big Social Security surplus makes it respectable to contemplate advance-funding of the costs of old age as a general fiscal strategy.

In addition, there is a real ground swell of popular support for long-term care, both home care and nursing care. At present, Medicare does not cover nursing home stays, nor do most private health insurance plans. To qualify for nursing home care under Medicaid, middle-class people must first become welfare cases. Often a healthy spouse must also become a pauper, so that a wife or husband with Alzheimer's disease or some other debilitating illness can meet the welfare test for extended nursing care. Home care, an often superior alternative, falls between the policy cracks, because no major public program or private insurance policy reimburses its costs. As a result, large numbers of old people who might remain in their own homes at a fraction of the cost to society are put into nursing homes.

It is convenient to dismiss this political tide as the artificial creation of a mob of prosperous elders, whipped into a frenzy by the American Association of Retired Persons. In truth, as any middle-aged American with an elderly parent appreciates, care for an aging population is a multigenerational concern. Several recent public opinion polls have identified long-term care for the elderly as voters' top priority for increased government spending, outranking aid to the homeless, education, environment, defense, and every other issue. The support is hardly surprising, for most of us will eventually get old. And as the population ages, it makes sense to set aside money for its care in advance.

Another sign that long-term care has come of age is a volume published last spring by Alice Rivlin and Joshua Weiner, *Caring for the Disabled Elderly*. Rivlin, director of economic studies at the Brookings Institution, is former chief of the Congressional Budget Office, and something of a born-again fiscal conservative. In the mid-1980s she achieved notoriety as one of the first leading Democratic economists to place deficit reduction above all other social policy goals. The 1984 volume in Brookings's budget series "Economic Choices," the first under Rivlin's direction, called for a program of budget balance even more stringent

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than the Gramm-Rudman formula, including steep cuts in entitlements and new consumption taxes, leading the *Wall Street Journal* editorial page to crow, "Brookings Joins the Supply Side."

But if Rivlin's backing was a coup for conservatives in 1984, she is an even more surprising catch for liberals in 1988. Her new book carefully evaluates all the alternatives and concludes there is no adequate alternative to a general social insurance program to provide nursing and home care. Rivlin and Weiner suggest that a comprehensive program would cost about $12 billion to $18 billion yearly in addition to costs now borne by Medicaid, which would be folded into a new program. Variations on the theme, proposed by Senator Ted Kennedy, Congressman Claude Pepper, and others, put the annual cost at around $20 billion.

The fiscal deficiency in the Kennedy, Pepper, and Rivlin approaches is that each in its own way raise taxes just enough to finance current payouts; no addition to net savings would occur. But if the program were designed to accumulate gradually a large surplus, on the model of a private insurance plan, there would be both an economic and a political benefit. Economically, the nation would be setting aside money for its old age and adding to the savings supply. Politically, wage earners would know that they were being taxed to pay for their own retirement years, and not just for today's "undeserving" elders. The argument is often heard that the young are already bearing too heavy a tax load to pay for the old. The remedy is to create a retirement system in which the young are setting aside funds for themselves.

SOME SAY that tax-supported nursing care would tax everyone in order to allow people of means to pass their wealth along to their children, untouched by the expenses of old age. From that perspective, the present Medicaid-financed system of nursing care appeals, because it requires middle-class recipients of nursing home aid to deplete their own assets first. By analogy, it has been proposed that in any general program of long-term care, the government might bill the estates of people who consumed the care, after their demise. On reflection, however, it seems highly unjust that the heirs of people lucky enough not to need nursing care should collect untouched inheritances, while those whose parents or spouses required institutionalization should lose everything. The whole point of insurance is risk-sharing. If estates are to be tapped at all to pay for nursing care, it would be far more equitable to raise general estate taxes to pay the costs of those with the misfortune to spend their last days in a nursing home.

The Reagan tax cut of 1981 raised the exemption from federal inheritance taxes to $600,000, costing the Treasury on the order of $10 billion a year. To the opinion-leader class, $600,000 sounds like a rather modest estate, but in fact only one percent of estates last year met that test. If the tax threshold were lowered to $300,000, and tax rates on large estates raised, a small portion of the inheritances of the well-to-do would finance long-term care for everyone. There is no more defensible moment in the life cycle to justify redistributive taxation than at the time when the fortune of one generation is left to the next. Tapping estates to finance nursing care also addresses the "generational equity" concern, for it is a kind of post-mortem tax on the accumulated assets of the old to pay for the care of the old.

ADVANCE-FUNDED health care is only one source of social income that could also boost the collective savings rate. The other major source is the pension system, whose present form is inadequate both as a source of secure collective savings and of personal retirement income. As noted, pensions make up the one leg of the retirement income system that is currently advance-funded. Pension funds are now the principal source of new capital for the nation's capital markets, and they hold a prodigious $1.7 trillion in accumulated wealth. This form of collective savings has virtually supplanted private household savings. But a close look at the flaws in the private pension system offers a powerful argument in favor of a public, universal system.

Private pensions began early in this century as a management tool for rewarding long-service employees and for easing older workers out of the labor force. Gradually, private pensions have evolved into a system on which workers rely for part of their retirement income and on which the economy depends for capital accumulation. They are now partially regulated, and they consume about $40 billion in annual tax subsidies. But since employers are under no compulsion to provide pension plans, they are unreliable from the perspective of the employee and all but impossible to regulate effectively.

Only about half the nation's workers currently are enrolled in pension plans, and a plan may be terminated at the whim of the employer. Since 1980, when raiding of pension plans became widespread, management has taken some $18 billion out of pension plans on the premise that they were "overfunded." (Overfunding is the result of manipulated actuarial assumptions or an inflated stock market.) An employee also bears the risk that a firm may go bankrupt, or that it may change hands, and the system owes him only the pension credits accumulated to date. Although the law now requires that pension credits be locked in ("vested") after five years of service, a worker who changes jobs frequently loses substantial savings supposedly accumulated on his behalf. Unlike Social Security, which is fully indexed, only about two percent of private pension plans have a cost-of-living adjustment for inflation. A worker who retired in, say 1973, is being paid in 1973 dollars and has lost more than half the value of his pension, even though the money that he paid into the fund during his working life is earning a return in 1988 dollars.

Because pension plans are optional (to the employer), the attempt to regulate them has been a hopeless cause. The Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)

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imposes convoluted regulations on pension fund trustees, yet fails to protect employees from a wide range of abuses, most notably the raiding and termination of pension plans. Since 1980 the fraction of the work force covered by a pension plan has actually declined from 56 percent to 52 percent.

Yet earnings-related, contributory pensions remain a good idea, an important source of both capital and retirement income. The flaw in the current system is that the pension is tied to the individual's employer rather than to his earnings history, and that the fund of capital is usually controlled by the employer. All of the abuses and regulatory headaches would disappear if the crazy quilt of private pension plans were collapsed into a single national pension system, which would be fully "portable," following workers from job to job, and under the control of public trustees. A second-best reform would be a fully portable pension plus a "play or pay" rule, under which all employers would have to set up a private pension plan or pay a tax into a public plan for uncovered workers, as President Carter's Commission on Pension Policy recommended (with notably poor timing), in February 1981.

Like a system of advance-funded health care for the elderly, a universal pension system based on contributions and earnings history would increase the national savings rate and set aside real money for old age. The virtue of private systems of saving for retirement is not that they are private, but that they are advance-funded. But public systems can be advanced-funded too. The obstacles are mainly political, not economic. In the case of health care, there is predictable opposition from private insurers. In the case of pensions, there is a veritable pension/industrial complex ranging from actuaries to fund managers to large and small businesses that want the system to remain as it is.

BEYOND THE purely self-interested opposition, however, there are some fair policy questions about the liabilities of a system of savings for social welfare and retirement. They include these:

Won't this approach at some point create an excessive savings rate? No, we should only be so lucky! The real issue is whether to try to increase savings rates Reagan-style, by inducing the already wealthy to amass more wealth, or to raise the savings rate in a distributively fairer manner that helps ordinary people. Reaganomics actually lowered the savings rate, because the Reagan budget deficit consumed private savings. A social savings approach would raise it. Some conceivable rate of savings, of course, would be excessive. But as this approach gradually increases our total savings rate, the government can compensate by running a more accommodative monetary policy, and can run moderate deficits in the current budget as periodic anti-recession medicine.

Won't advance-funding require even higher taxes than a new round of pay-as-you-go entitlements? Yes, certainly. But these taxes will increase the national savings rate and give working-age people full confidence in the safety net for their own old age. It's worth it. If we muster the political support for a new round of entitlements, we might as well do it right, in a way that helps the larger economy at the same time. Reforming inheritance taxes and raising the income ceiling on payroll taxes would produce most of the necessary money. A fallback alternative is a value-added tax.

Why not just rely on private insurance and private savings? Because most people don't make enough money to put aside sufficient funds for both living expenses and health emergencies in their retirement. Even when the government was bribing people to save, through Individual Retirement Accounts, only about seven percent of people with incomes below $20,000 a year and 18 percent of people earning $20,000 to $35,000 a year had IRA accounts. Moderate-income people, in general, are strapped to make ends meet. They don't save much. Also, private insurance raises the problem of what insurers delicately call "adverse selection," meaning that people most likely to incur costs have the effrontery to apply for the policy. With universal social insurance, there is no such problem.

Who will control the money in these new health and retirement trust funds? Public trustees. The money would be invested in government and corporate bonds, and in blue-chip stocks. Public trustees could hardly do worse than the current crop of pension funds managers, who churn their accounts, collect fat fees, and fail even to match the Dow Jones average performance. It is also an exquisite irony that pension funds are sometimes the fuel for the hostile takeovers that result in the termination of those funds. Public trustees would get pension funds out of the hostile takeover game. This new pool of social capital for blue-chip investments would also free up private capital to play a more entrepreneurial role, to which it is suited.

Isn't this scheme rather collectivist? Indeed it is. But so are Social Security and Medicare, and so is the General Motors pension fund. All of them amass collective capital on behalf of individuals. The difference is that private pension funds keep pools of collective savings under arbitrary private control. They confuse the public policy goal of amassing retirement savings with narrow private goals of financing corporate takeovers or maximizing current corporate earnings, and they create capricious hardships for beneficiaries. The public approach cuts through a whole messy series of regulatory dilemmas, because it is collective, universal, and does not need to pit public goals against private ones.

TO THRIVE as an economy, America must increase its savings rate. To thrive as a society, America must find the money to allow its citizens to live out their years in dignity. These goals need not be in conflict. At issue is whether we are willing to open the door to social savings, an approach that is superior in terms of both social equity and economic efficiency. □

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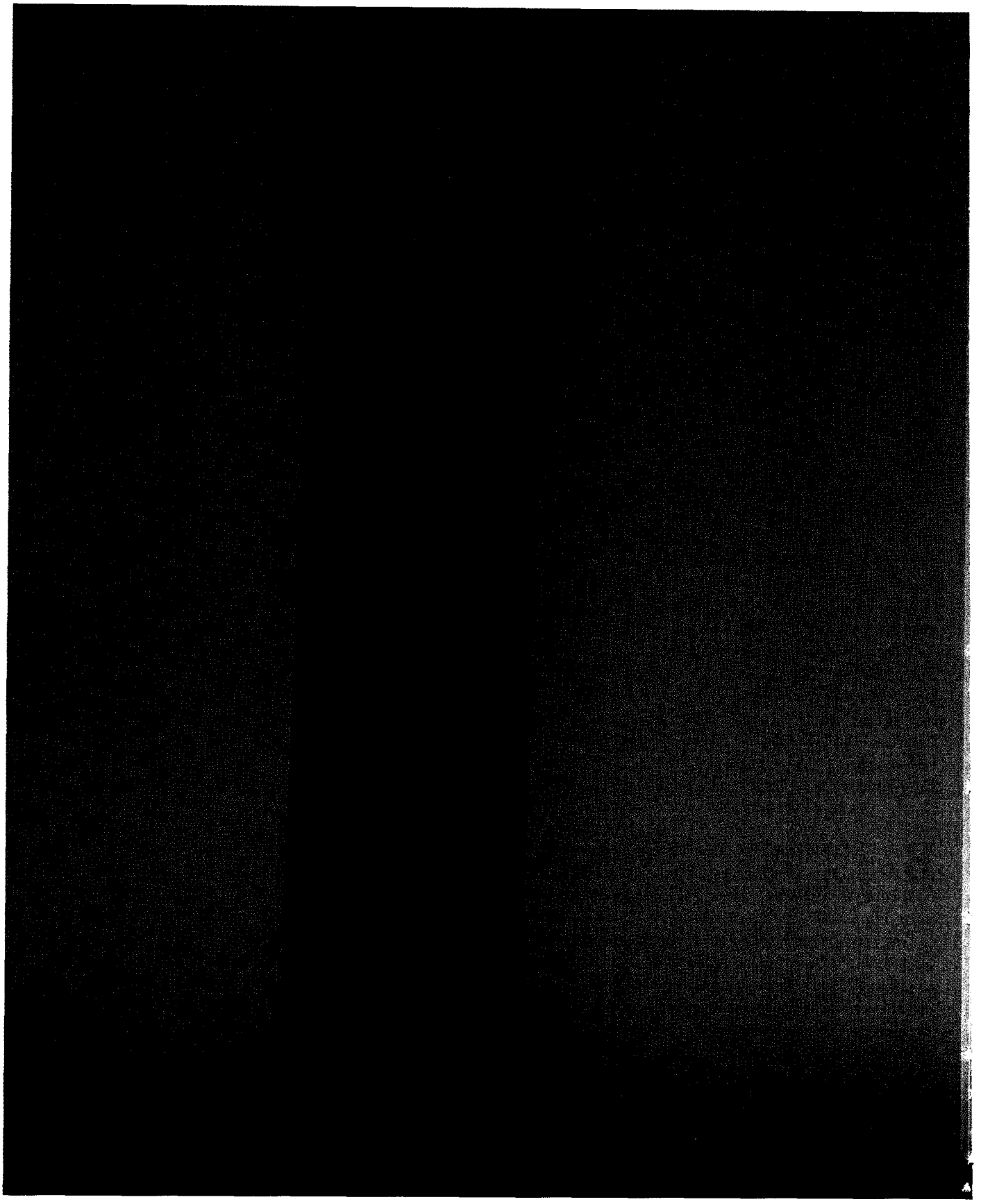

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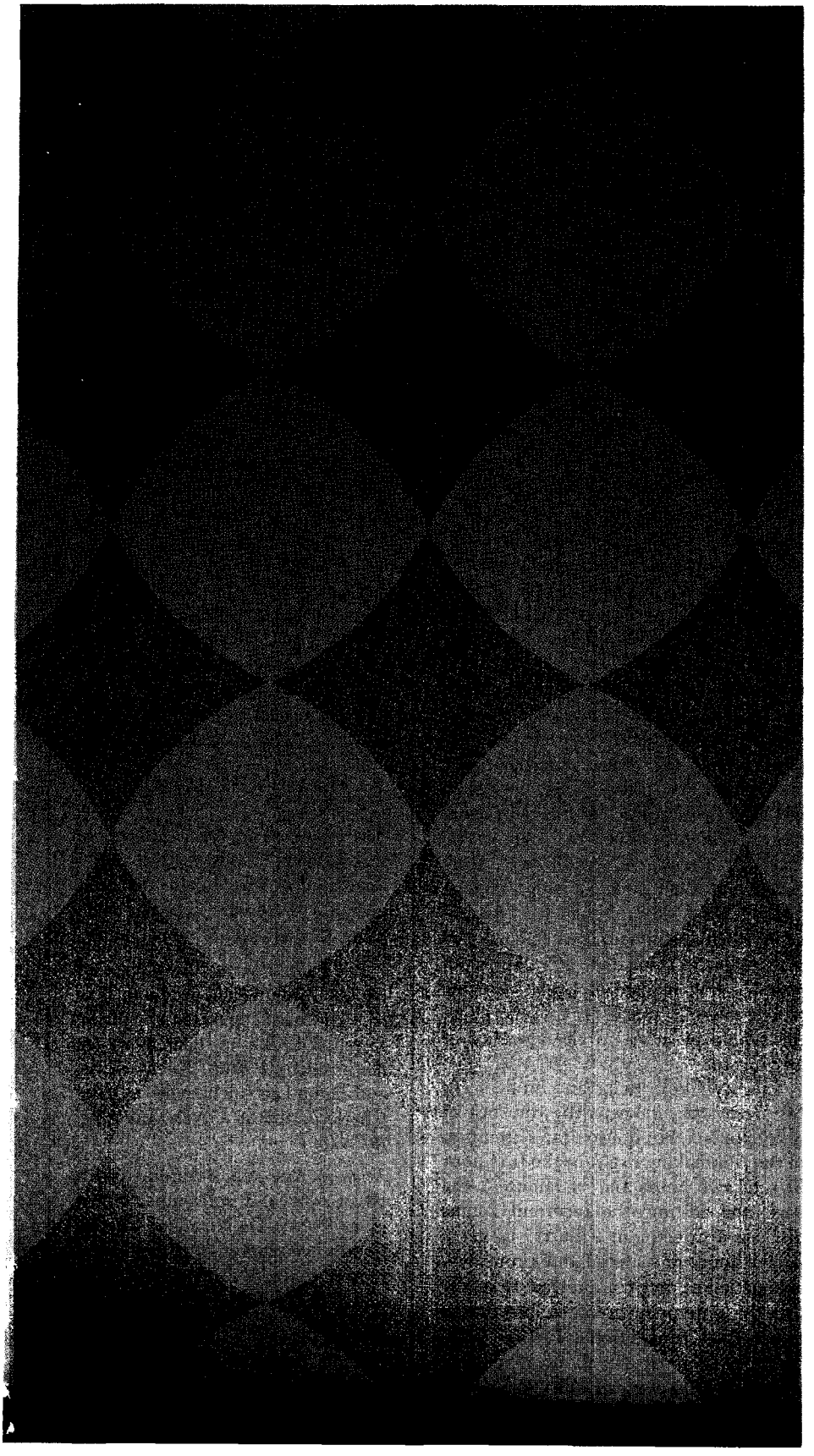

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

A Mission

Nikos Kazantzakis's novel *The Last Temptation of Christ* is an overheated rendering of a sophomorically daring idea. Jesus is portrayed simply as a man who is a carpenter making a living until by God's will he is wrested out of a mundane life into a messianic mission and who, after crucifixion, descends from the cross—in fantasy, at least—to marry Mary Magdalene. When she dies in childbirth, he marries Mary of Bethany and has children by her and her sister Martha. At the natural end of a long life he returns to the cross and completes the agony.

The Last Temptation of Christ
(Universal)

The writing, in P. A. Bien's translation from the Greek, is often just this side of ludicrous. Sometimes it crosses over. (An innkeeper says, "Scram!" When Jesus is bringing a sick girl back to health: "Her entrails rustled and stirred like the leaves of a poplar caught in a gentle breeze.") The by now banal theme, for which Kazantzakis felt he needed to supply an introductory explanation, is that both spirit and flesh are divine; thus a drama that shows Jesus partaking of both divinities will bring him closer to mortals. By showing Jesus's struggle between spirit and flesh, "this book . . . is the confession of every man who struggles." (Women, apparently, don't struggle.)

This sweatily theatrical "great" novel is the sort of book to appeal to a filmmaker in search of the grandiosely dramatic. Martin Scorsese, an exceptionally talented man, has at times shown himself vulnerable to so-called strong ideas. His poorer films, such as *King of Comedy* and *Taxi Driver*, reveal that vulnerability. His better films, such as *After Hours* and the superb *Raging Bull*, live more through overall texture than gimmick. I don't imply that *The Last Temptation* is only a gimmick; but I can't imagine Scorsese making a picture about Jesus without some sort of handle that, in itself, distinguished the film from traditional films on the subject. The Kazantzakis novel provided utter sincerity, a simplistic theme, and a startling approach.

Startling, that is, to those who don't know Pier Paolo Pasolini's *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*. Pasolini, too, wanted to show the human Christ, the man of the people, and in his *Gospel*—one of the few truly religious films I know—he accomplished this end largely by his casting, using ordinary people as actors the way that the Italian painters of the Renaissance used Tuscans and Umbrians as models for their paintings of the Jesus story.

Scorsese follows the Pasolini example in two ways. As Pasolini's people spoke familiar Italian, so the speech of Scorsese's actors is urban American. (The only exception is Pilate, a Roman.) Harvey Keitel, as Judas, speaks pure pool room. Willem Dafoe, as Jesus, says, "You dint know me." And like Pasolini, Scorsese doesn't adopt a new, aggrandized style, he follows his natural bent. With Pasolini, it was Italian neorealism; with Scorsese, it's American post-Method realism, hot and hurtling, which relies as much on the energy of the whole piece as on the specifics of any instant.

This style both helps and hinders *The Last Temptation*. It keeps the film out of waxy pietism, but it also draws attention to the filmmaking itself. In the first hour (it runs two hours and 44 minutes), the pace, the editing, the recurrent zooms disclose a director in a hurry: to get a large amount of material and a considerable period of time compressed, to establish the enterprise as accessible drama rather than conventional Passion Play. But he's so muscular about all of this that for a time we can only watch him bustling about.

As the film progresses, as Jesus moves into his position as rabbi and messiah, it improves. Some of it is excellent: the confrontation with Pilate, the Via Dolorosa, the Crucifixion itself, among other passages. But the compression makes the early sections synoptic, and the whole film labors under the burden of its dialogue. In this screenplay attributed to Paul Schrader (others, including Scorsese, are said to have contributed), some of the most famous utterances in history are rendered in a new, unprepossessing vulgate, and some of the other dialogue is painfully flat. (Jesus: "The foundation is the soul." Judas: "No, the foundation is the body.")

Willem Dafoe, of *Platoon*, is a forthright, intelligent actor, and he gives a deeply committed performance. If his speech is somewhat too unpretentious, still he creates a man carried away by a purposeful god as a tidal wave might sweep a tiny vessel. His Jesus grows as he moves along his predestined path. Harvey Keitel, who has been working with Scorsese since the start of both their careers, tries hard for verity as Judas, but we're mostly aware that Keitel is doing something outside his usual range. The same is true of Harry Dean Stanton as Saul/Paul. The casting of David Bowie as Pilate was acute: he sounds like no one else in the film, and in a brief scene he conveys imperial, courteous boredom.

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Boyfriends and Girlfriends. Another of Eric Rohmer's conversation pieces about love, exquisitely made as ever but somewhat skimpier than most. (Reviewed 8/1/88)

A Fish Called Wanda. John Cleese, of Monty Python, co-wrote and is in this frenzied, frequently funny farce. (I'd like to hear him say *that*.) Michael Palin, Kevin Kline, and Jamie Lee Curtis help, as does Charles Crichton's lively directing. (8/29/88)

Midnight Run. A plot crammed with shoot-outs and smashups, but it gives Robert De Niro and Charles Grodin, as captor and captive, a reason to cross America together and to play some wry, witty scenes. (8/29/88)

Pascali's Island. Ben Kingsley is perfect, Charles Dance and Helen Mirren compelling, in this tale of intrigue on an Aegean island in 1908. The plot thins, the acting doesn't. (8/8&15/88)

SK

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The most prominent woman's role is Mary Magdalene, which Barbara Hershey performs with every intent to give the woman roundness. But the screenplay makes this somewhat difficult.

On the subject of women: the angel who takes Jesus from the cross tells him that one woman is much like another, they are all one woman with different faces. The angel repeats this after the Magdalene's death, before arranging a match with Mary of Bethany. Debate about this film has centered on the sexual matters in it; no one has mentioned its sexism.

The cinematography by Michael Ballhaus could not be overpraised. He captures perfectly the desert air and size—the film was shot in Morocco—and in the interior scenes he has managed to give Jesus touches of incandescence without any kind of halo lighting. Ballhaus's color plans were greatly helped, or perhaps it's vice versa, by the costumes of Jean-Pierre Delifer, which are very fine. Delifer has worked out of a palette of earth colors, linked to the Moroccan landscape. The beige and brown and umber, the natural linens, are used with marvelous finesse, never repetitious, never glaringly contrasted. With the Roman soldiery, for instance, there are no sudden flashes of brass and scarlet. I can't remember a more subtly graded, more subtly persuasive ensemble of costume designs.

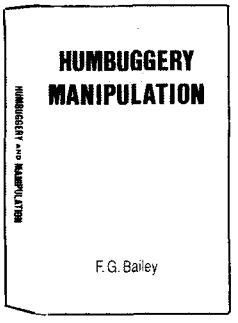
Peter Gabriel's music is, for the most part, excellent. The apprehension one feels about the music of biblical pictures—let's call it celestialchoirphobia—quickly vanishes. Gabriel based his score on Arabic motifs and rhythms, which suit perfectly the Semitic ambience of the story. Paradoxically, it's only when Jesus leaves the cross and becomes a family man that the music gets a bit pontifical.

Uproar Note. I haven't discussed the immense furor caused by this film because I didn't want to belabor, for the readers of this journal, the evil of attempts at prior restraint, of anti-Semitism promoted under the smarmy guise of trying to forestall anti-Semitism. I also assume that TNR's readers believe that those people who think the film is blasphemous—even if they haven't seen it!—have the right of peaceful protest. But there is an irony: the protesters against the worldliness of this film ignore the fact that its conclusion emphasizes the transcendence of the spirit over the flesh. □

HUMBUGGERY AND MANIPULATION

The Art of Leadership

F.G. Bailey



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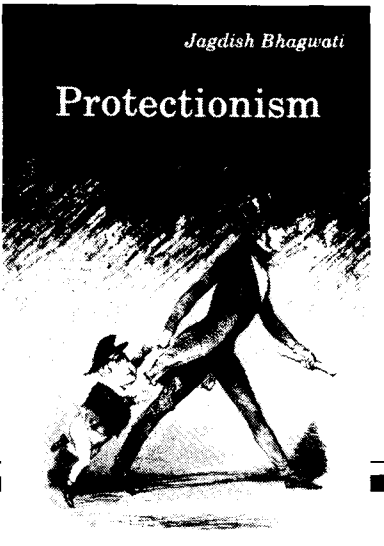

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ROBERT BRUSTEIN ON THEATER

Breaking the Frame

A favorite Orson Welles process, when he was running the Mercury Theatre, was something he called "breaking the frame," whereby actors shattered the imaginary fourth wall to create a more direct relationship with the audience. There was nothing particularly novel about this theatrical device—it formed the essence, for example, of Elizabethan theater, with its monologues, asides, and choral speeches. But the conventions of 19th-century realism and the box set had somehow managed to segregate the stage from the auditorium, turning the audience into mute witnesses, if not voyeurs.

Road
by Jim Cartwright
(La Mama E.T.C.)

The Mistress of the Inn
by Carlo Goldoni
(Roundabout Theatre)

The extent of audience involvement in a play was one of the issues dividing Stanislavsky and Meyerhold, as it later divided Stanislavsky and Brecht, and the conflict was vigorously pursued by their followers in the United States. In the 1930s Welles took up the anti-realist banner in opposition to the rival Stanislavsky-oriented Group Theatre. In the '40s and '50s, critics led by Walter Kerr and playwrights led by Thornton Wilder began to blame the proscenium arch for all the woes of the American stage. And in the '60s the Living Theatre (following Pirandello) so erased the dividing line between actors and spectators that it was arguable whether the playing area was on the stage, in the house, in the lobby, or out on the street.

To this day, experimental theater is mainly characterized by "breaking the frame," while mainstream Broadway drama continues to be a social-realist expression glimpsed through a proscenium by an audience cast as Peeping Toms. Still, the issue of inclusion and exclusion is more complicated than it seems. Jim Cartwright's *Road*, for example, like the Living Theatre's *Paradise Now*, suggests that "breaking the frame" can sometimes create another form of peephole eavesdropping. A production of the Lincoln Center Theater at La Mama E.T.C. (part of Lincoln Center's recent decision to produce in every New York theater but the Beaumont), Cartwright's play is very much in the tradition of English working-class protest drama from John Osborne to Howard Brenton, except for two things: it is wholly lacking in eloquence, and the action occurs in an environment rather than a set.

La Mama's generous open space, with tiers of seats above and a promenading audience below, has often played host to environmental theater, most notably the productions of Andrei Serban and Peter Brook. The difference here is that instead of being a metaphorical creation like Serban's *Fragments of a Trilogy*, *Road* is a conventional naturalistic play more appropriate for a proscenium stage. The junkyard setting, for example—a Lancashire road surrounded by burnt-out bricks, tasteless wallpaper, a battered Volkswagen, barn doors, billboards, and a dead tree—looks more like a simulation the closer you get to the materials. And the closer you get to the characters, the more they look like Equity actors. Just as the bricks are built out of molded Styrofoam, so the bums and hookers owe their complexions to Max Factor. For frame-breakers like Jean Genet, imposture is the very essence of the theatrical masquerade, the artificial is purposely confounded with the real. In *Road*, everything seems artificial, even though the environment has been intentionally designed for an impression of total authenticity.

The action is located on a series of five stations, like mansions in a mystery play, where (inches away from their faces) you can watch the characters in the process of ironing, fixing motors, meditating, applying makeup, drinking, fornicating, fighting, and complaining about their fate ("Fuckin' long life, isn't it?"). Everybody's unhappy, the future is bleak, the vignettes are monotonous wails of desperation: "Work, work, work—small wages—then Death with a big D." The blame for all this misery is always assigned to someone else ("I'm like I am because of you," says one slut to her nagging mother), and eventually it transpires that the root cause of these blighted lives is Margaret Thatcher's England: "I blame you, Business," moans a jobless discontent, "and you, Religion, its favorite friend—hand to hand, you have murdered the child in man."

This kind of carious rhetoric is further decomposed by unfortunate attempts at working-class Lancashire accents by otherwise competent actors. Instead of animating the play, such abstract resentment only makes it more tedious. *Road* is poor sociology, and derivative experimentation. It is clear enough before the end of the first act that Cartwright is rewriting *Our Town* from a Zolaist perspective. Wilder's Stage Manager has become a drunken panhandler named Scullery who introduces the characters and sets the scene ("There's the road. Here's the road") between slugs of rum, and George and Emily are now two morbid lovers named Joey and Clare, fasting to death in bed in protest against an unjust world. Fearing that Wilder's funeral scene would be played in an automobile graveyard or the drugstore scene in a toilet (chemical substances replacing ice cream sodas in the straws), I quietly took my leave during the disco intermission.

CARLO GOLDONI'S *The Mistress of the Inn* at the Roundabout Theatre is another play that breaks the frame, though for purposes of entertainment rather than sociology. This pleasant if slight 18th-century prose comedy is a little gem of bourgeois theater—like a Shakespeare romantic play without the poetry, or a Di Ponte libretto without Mozart's music. Goldoni's chief rival in Italy at the time was the aristocratic Carlo Gozzi. Both playwrights were indebted to the tradition of *commedia dell'arte*, but, drawing deeper from the wells of fantasy and myth, Gozzi has proved much closer to our contemporary sensibility. Nevertheless, *The Mistress of the Inn* has its small charms, which are enhanced in this production through the labors of an attractive cast under Robert Kalfin's direction.

The play concerns the enticing Mirandolina, who runs a small inn in Florence. An independent woman with "an implacable will" that puts her in line of feminist heroines, she is beloved by her customers (two aging noblemen), and by her Steward, Fabrizio. Only one man ignores her, the misogynistic Cavalier di Ripafratta, so naturally she sets her cap for him: "Bit by bit I shall domesticate

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IS RELIGION JUST FOR THE IGNORANT?

In many intellectual circles the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted and unlettered. Yet, recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, and amid inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious renaissance entail embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or superpatriotism. Nor does it imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, or human dignity. Rather, there's an awareness that, as Jean Bethke Elshtain put it, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political choices which are far more durable than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

The New York Times Magazine article discussed the NEW OXFORD REVIEW as part of this return to religion, and rightly so. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with what Daniel Bell terms "the sacred." We are particularly interested in exploring religious commitments that yield humane social consequences, as exemplified by such giants as St. Francis, Gandhi, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Tawney, Schumacher, Mounier, Dorothy Day, Archbishop Tutu, Lech Walesa, Martin Luther King Jr., and Archbishop Romero. And we probe the literary and philosophical riches offered by such greats as Kierkegaard, Tolstoy, Buber, Auden, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Waugh, Merton, C.S. Lewis, Simone Weil, Flannery O'Connor, and Graham Greene.

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this beast. . . . If he doesn't fall in love tomorrow, may my nose fall off." In due time, Ripafratta is hooked and becomes the most jealous of lovers, fighting a mock duel with one of his rivals, using the other's broken sword. To everybody's surprise, she ultimately rejects him, along with her other two aristocratic suitors, and accepts the hand of her servant, Fabrizio.

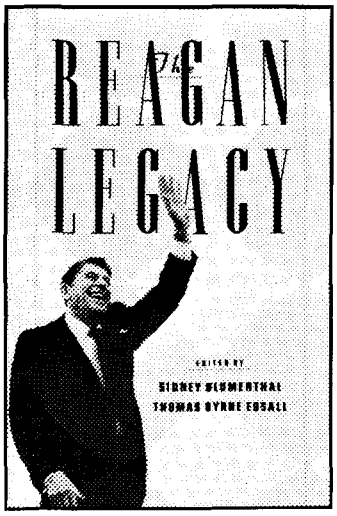
The play is full of democratic sentiment—Mirandolina marries down rather than up in class, and refuses to go for money because she values her freedom too much. Aside from her use of guile to manipulate men (she sometimes seems like a middle-class version of the Marquise in *Liaisons Dangereuses*), Mirandolina is bursting with moral health. This relentless healthiness can get a little tiresome, it's true, but as performed by Tovah Feldshuh in a curly red wig, yellow shoes, and layers of skirts, the heroine is as irresistible as she claims. Miss Feldshuh speaks the part with a hoarse whiplash voice vaguely tinted with the inflections of Yentl, whom she also played under Kalfin's direction. She has the spirit, speed, and mischievousness of Mozart's Suzannah, along with strong support by other members of the cast. Philip Kerr, playing Ripafratta with an odd middle-European accent, has the arthritic dash of an aging musketeer; Gabriel Barre, looking like a young F. Murray Abraham, is wily and inventive as Fabrizio; and George Ede and Edward Zang, as the two aristocrats, bring a nice relaxed exhaustion to their parts, though Zang occasionally seems a bit unfocused.

Kalfin's production is fast and stylish. The set design, by Wolfgang Roth, is a simple wooden structure with a white muslin curtain stretched between the scaffolding, decorated with a gouache backdrop and three frequently slammed doors for farcical effect. The Mozart and Vivaldi transition music is appropriate. And the adaptation by Mark A. Michaels is terse and speakable, retaining a few Italian phrases to localize the atmosphere.

WHAT DISTURBED ME a little about the enterprise is a habit that delighted the largely geriatric matinee group I saw it with: the way the performers, by breaking the frame, are encouraged to ingratiate themselves with the spectators. Miss Feldshuh's relationship with the audience is particularly winky and intimate. She draws applause from the women by telling them she adores making fun of men. She flirts with them, saying: "I really enjoy making men do everything I want—so do you." She fawns on the front row by outlining her plans. She peeks through the curtain at the beginning of the second act to notice "You're back." And finally, after vowing to change her ways, she throws the audience a bouquet of flowers, begging that we "remember kindly the mistress of the inn." All of this is perky, impish, and intimate, but also somewhat abject—the independence she wins from her suitors she abandons to the paying customers.

By enacting scenes of misery and outrage at close range, *Road* treats the audience like passive observers of oppression and injustice. By flattering the audience with excessive attention, *The Mistress of the Inn* turns it into potential publicists for a long-running show. In neither case does the process of breaking the frame engage us in a significant creative relationship that reflects the metaphysical and vatic purpose of great theater. □

The Reagan years—



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ONLY PROJECT

Painting as an Art
by Richard Wollheim

(Princeton University Press, 384 pp., $45)

Was it in the first grade, when we drew our chairs around the phonograph-player to listen to I no longer remember what symphonic music, our childish faces dutifully screwed into attitudes of attentive concentration? As eager to please the teacher as anyone else, I remember being puzzled, however, about how I was to concentrate, about what I was to attend to. So I did the only relevant thing I could do: I imagined lovely ballerinas in long pink tutus dancing their way through the musical space; an imaginative impulse prompted, I am sure, by Walt Disney, since I had almost certainly seen *Fantasia* not long before.

The use of art, of music, paintings, novels, and poems, as projective spaces, as nearly blank screens on which to elaborate one's fantasies, daydreams, reveries of every kind, is surely the most infantile of aesthetic responses. It is a response that is deaf to the expressive language available to a given artistic medium. After all, artistic languages—visual, textual, or auditory—have their own histories, their own formal demands, their own socially constructed roles, their own transgressive potentials. Projection, however, substitutes other things for these languages, spins a web of the viewer's own making around the work in question. Projection, one would have thought, is perhaps the least promising phenomenon on which to build an aesthetic theory. But it is projection, of all things, that Richard Wollheim has chosen as the centerpiece of his aesthetic theory in *Painting as an Art*.

It would be nice to report, in a spirit of support for the underdog, that this particular philosophical and psychological sow's ear has been magically transformed in Wollheim's hands. But no silk purse emerges from these dense pages of exposition and argument, argument whose perverse disdain for a good part of the literature in the field Wollheim is discussing (art history, not to mention philosophy) leaves one feeling less than sportsmanlike at the end of the encounter.

Wollheim is interested in the practice of painting "as an art," rather than as a hobby (Sunday painting), a therapeutic release (psychotic pictorial production), a psychological experiment (chimps with brushes), and so on. He insists that the definition of art must turn on intention. Art is art because the artist intends what he is doing to be art, rather than the myriad other possibilities. Intention, as Wollheim is invoking it here, is taken to be a prior mental act that secures beforehand the meaning of an utterance or a gesture. "An action is intentional under a certain description," writes Wollheim, "if what guides the person's action is the corresponding thought. A thought guides an action when it both causes it and forms its character."

The insistence that meaning is secured by intention, and consequently, that for something to be meaningful it must have been intended, belongs to a philosophical position, known as mentalism, that has been under heavy attack throughout this century. But Wollheim is untroubled here by the many objections to mentalism posed by conventionalist models (conventionalism is the view that meaning is constructed socially, not given naturally), by psychoanalytic models, by structuralist models, and by semiological models of meaning. He proceeds, instead, to the nub of the matter for his (intentionalist) position. How can the artist be sure, he asks, that what is intended is what has actually appeared on the canvas as it is received by a viewer? Everything turns, after all, on the viewer, for what is required by his account of the aesthetic object is a correspondence between prior intention and final result.

It is in order to characterize the "artness" of the artist's intention, as opposed to the claims to artistic intention of the Sunday painter, of the bad painter, of the proud parent speaking of his gifted child, that Wollheim turns to the issue of projection, and grounds his theory on it. The success of the artist's intention, in Wollheim's account, must depend on the viewer's projec-

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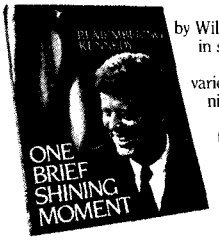

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tion. For what makes good the real artist's claim to communicate through his or her medium is that the real artist is able to intend every bit of what is on the finished canvas: every stroke's relation to every figment of depicted object; every inch of the surface pattern's connection to every implied expanse of projected space; every meshing of form to content. In order for all this to be possible, intention must have a certain phenomenological resource available to it: projection.

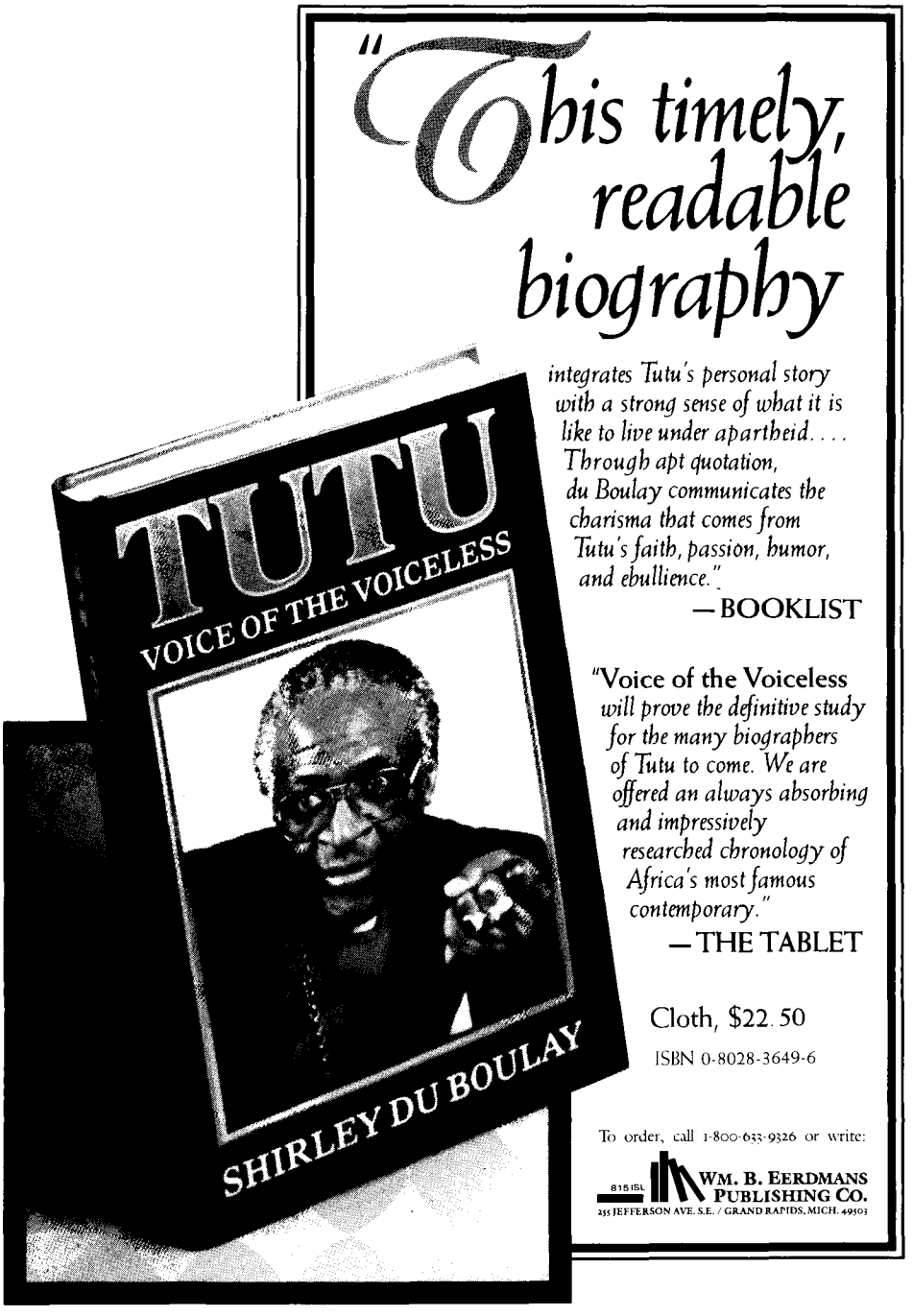
Everyone who has ever been shown an inkblot and been asked to see something in it (bat, bear, vagina . . .), everyone who has listened to Hamlet make fun of Polonius seeing a camel in the cloud they are both observing, everyone who has mentally turned the patterns of doodling, or frost, or crumbs on the table, into a figurative image, has been witness to what psychologists call projection, and what Wollheim calls "seeing-in." Of course, there is a sense in which seeing-in is wholly uncontroversial; surface pattern can, as in the examples above, yield fictive or projected images. In those examples, however, nothing is controlled. What is notable about them, in fact, is their capriciousness: in a given Rorschach test, what I see as a squirrel's tail you see as a baseball bat.

How, then, can the phenomenon of projection be made to provide the grounds for asserting the primacy of the real artist's intention? Wollheim's answer is that the artist is not making random patterns (as in inkblots or splotches on the wall), but specific ones. In other words, what the artist needs to control, if he is to make his full, intentional impact (and leave nothing over, nothing *un*intended), is the effect of these marks on the surface of the image *and* its fictive space, or depth. Wollheim's view of projection, or seeing-in, is that it carries with it just this simultaneity. Thus, contrary to what most people think (and contrary to what informs much of Ernst Gombrich's exposition in *Art and Illusion*), Wollheim insists that seeing-in is not a matter of oscillating between seeing the surface and seeing the figure "behind" it. It is instead the experience of a single manifold with two aspects that can be grasped in a seamless continuum that Wollheim dubs "twofoldness":

> The two things that happen when I look at, for instance, the stained wall are, it must be stressed, two aspects of a single experience that I have, and the two aspects are distinguishable but also inseparable. They are two aspects of a single experience, they are not two experiences. They are neither two separate simultaneous experiences, which I somehow hold in the mind at once, nor two separate alternating experiences, between which I oscillate—though it is true that each aspect of the single experience is capable of being described as analogous to a separate experience.

It is this putative "twofoldness" that will arm the real artist with the capacity for that total perceptual control that Wollheim makes the criterion of true painterly intention. For in his or her own experience of the work in progress, nothing will escape this master painter, equipped with this very special omniscience. The artist will structure a picture with exactly the meaning that fulfills his or her intention, and the viewer, ready on the receiving end with the same phenomenological resource, will be able to unpack that intention. As Wollheim writes:

> My contention [is] that what a painting represents can be defined in terms of what a spectator can see in it, provided only that what he sees in it concurs with, and is brought about through, the artist's fulfilled intention. The spectator's experience is a determinant of the painting's representa-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tional content if he perceives the picture not only representationally but correctly.

Besides seeing-in, there are other perceptual capacities that Wollheim calls upon in building his argument about painting "as an art." One of these is the ability to endow what we see with affect, a potential for empathy that Wollheim calls "expressive perception." The other is the capacity to feel pleasure in the very act of viewing. But neither of these last two resources carries the real brunt of his argument: they come across, rather, as something added to what could be thought of as a foundational condition for the very possibility of experiencing representation in the first place, and, more importantly, of connecting representation to an artist's intention to mean.

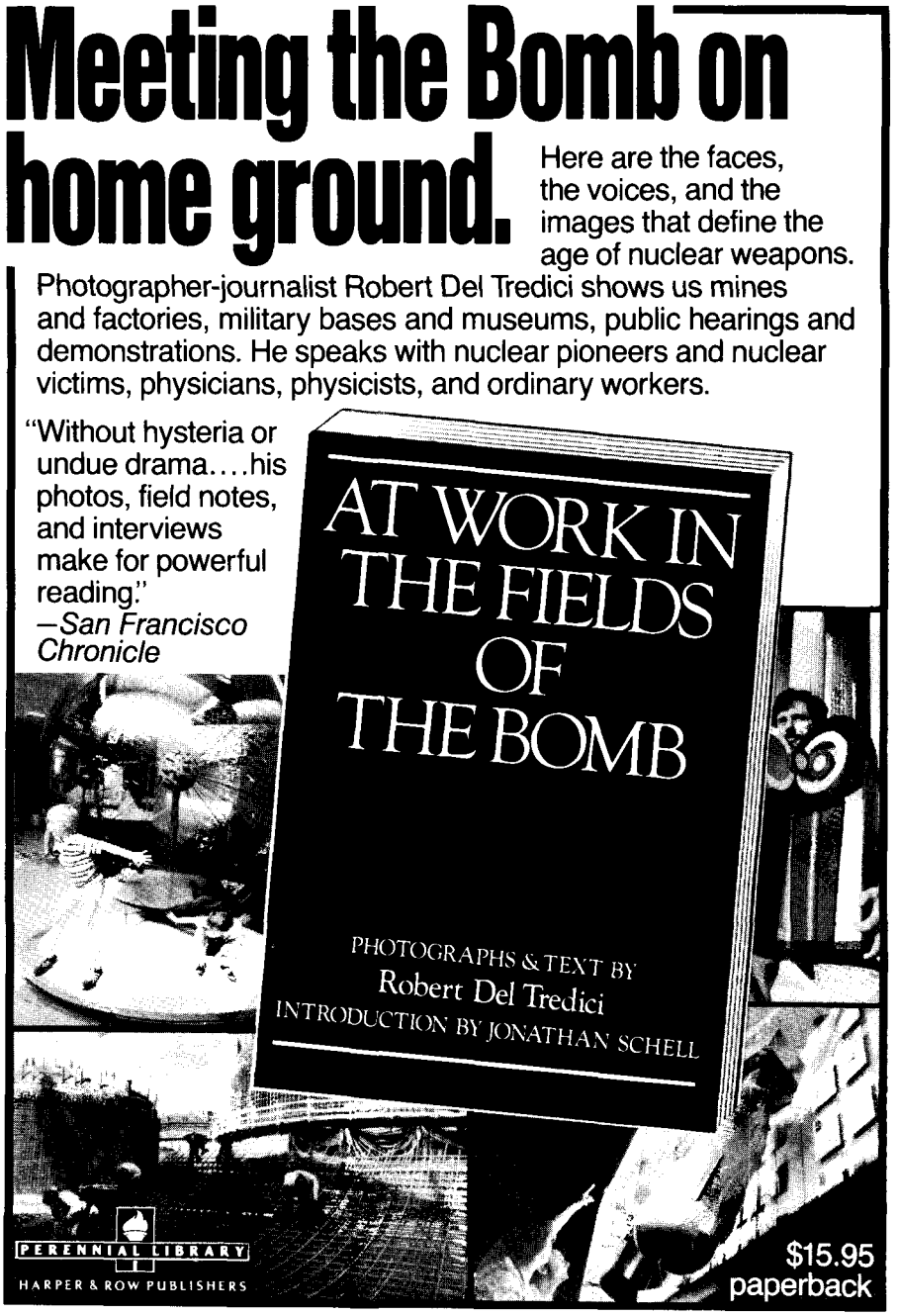
CARRIED AWAY by seeing-in, and by the importance of its promise of authorial control as a solution to those long-standing aesthetic dilemmas about the nature of art, Wollheim insists on this resource as an innate human capacity that certain of us can tap and others cannot (or at least not to the same extent). He wants this seeing-in, with its twofoldness, to be primal. "Seeing-in, as I have described it," he says, "precedes representation: it is prior to it, logically and historically."

The "logic" part of this assertion seems to be that projection is something that comes naturally—"I can see something in surfaces that neither are nor are believed by me to be representations." The historical part refers to Wollheim's understanding of the origins of art in cave painting, where the outcropping of the cave wall, by means of seeing-in, becomes the basis for those few lines or incisions by which our ancestors transformed the swollen face of the rock into the representation of a bison or a mammoth.

Now, for someone whose argument rests on a particular perceptual capacity and its "distinctive phenomenological feature [which] I call 'twofoldness,'" the philosopher who wrote *Painting as an Art* is awfully fast and loose with this core of his demonstration. Is seeing-in really prior to representation "historically" and "logically"? Is there evidence of any kind to support the "twofoldness" that is supposed to characterize seeing-in (and without which seeing-in would be useless for the job Wollheim wants it to do)?

Historically. Take the critical example of the cave paintings. Wollheim writes as though the last 50 years of inquiry into the origin and function of Paleolithic painting had never occurred. It happens, however, that one extremely important claim of that inquiry (made by André Leroi-Gourhan) is that cave painting is a kind of language, a binary structure employing a sort of Morse code of dot-dash, in which the pure abstractness of dots and dashes can be maintained (as in the grids in the caves at Lascaux), or their coded nature can be rendered by other things used as signs (as in the handprints from Gargas, with their opposition between full-fingered prints and prints with the finger joints "missing"), or can be given through a sorting of animals into dot (bison) or dash (horse), that is, into the symbolic function of a language.

This analysis, in other words, leads miles away from the late 19th-century Wollheim-like speculation about seeing in (or rather, seeing-in) the outcropping an incipient horse. For if the heart of the matter for the cave painters was the code rather than the image, the inscription of that code (into what Leroi-Gourhan calls a mythogram) seems "historically" to have preceded the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"seeing-in" aspect of representation. It is not clear what Wollheim's "historical" claim would be able to counter to Leroi-Gourhan's conclusion: "Figurative art, at its origin, is directly tied to language and is much closer to writing, in the broadest sense of the term, than to the work of art."

EMPIRICALLY. Twofoldness is critical for Wollheim's notion of seeing-in, if seeing-in is to equip Wollheim's intending agent with the kind of authorial control over surface and depth that will make him or her a real, Wollheimian artist. Thus Wollheim repeatedly asserts that *this* is the very nature of the perception of images. Is there any evidence that would support this assertion? There is not; and so far from there being nothing brought to support this contention, the mountain of evidence on the neurophysiology of perception, on the nature of brain functions, on the complex matters of figure/field that have haunted perceptual-psychological research for almost a century, all point precisely the other way. Seeing marks on a surface in their two-dimensional aspect involves a different brain function from a seeing that projects the same marks into a fictive three-dimensionality. And these two brain functions cannot operate simultaneously. Wollheim never refers (to refute or even to forestall) to this body of research.

Of course, we could be broad-minded and agree to let a philosopher off the empirical hook. But in the wings of Wollheim's own discipline there is a logical probing of perception, a philosophical tradition, called phenomenology. And although Wollheim invokes the term phenomenology with regard to his own enterprise, he is content never to mention a single name associated with a serious philosophical account of its logic: not Husserl, not Sartre, not Merleau-Ponty. In 1940, for example, Sartre wrote a whole book on what could be called seeing-in. Translated as *The Psychology of Imagination*, his argument followed Husserl in assigning to the seeing of images a special, separate "intentional consciousness." The point was that one cannot see the "hyletic contents" of the image (the marks on the surface, on the paper, and so on) at the same time as one sees its imagistic (or representational) contents.

Husserl would have been puzzled by the notion of twofoldness; but neither Sartre nor Husserl, nor their arguments, are addressed by Wollheim. In an earlier essay ("Seeing-as, Seeing-in"), Wollheim did allude in passing to Sartre on the question of twofoldness, only to slip out of the grip of his analysis with an offhand, "the details of Sartre's account need not detain us." (This posture of benign neglect, or a bizarre sleight of hand about the content of another philosopher's argument, is characteristic of Wollheim's intellectual comportment.) The reason they are not addressed, of course, is that Continental phenomenology involved a rigorous de-psychologizing of the subject of its investigations. Such a banishment of psychology, however, is utterly foreign to all of Wollheim's various moves to promote, or to resurrect, the intentional subject as the essence of the artist.

LOGICALLY. It is certainly true that "I can see something in surfaces that neither are nor are believed by me to be representations." But if the issue is priorness, the question is, do I do this naturally, or was I taught?

It might seem arch for Wollheim to have replaced the term "projection" with his "seeing-in." But there is a philosophical consequence to his diction. Seeing-in rhymes, philosophically, with "seeing-as." That is, it refers by implication to Wittgenstein's discussion of seeing pictures in his *Philosophical Investigations*. That discussion—as anti-mentalist as everything else in the later Wittgenstein—set forth a conventionalist, utterly de-psychologized theory not only of seeing pictures, but of seeing in general. Seeing-as (as in the sentence, "I see this square with a triangle on top of it as a house") is, Wittgenstein argues, a sleight-of-language to make us think something special is going on, something called "seeing-as"; whereas what is going on is that I *see* a house. And if I see this house on this page, it is because I have been taught from infancy to do so ("Look Joey, see the puppy, see the bumblebee, see the house").

For Wittgenstein, in short, as for any conventionalist argument about representation, the "logic" of "seeing-as" places the activity of projection *after*, not before. Projection is a result of, has an acquired relation to, representation. Once again, Wollheim fails to engage the other side, or the other tradition; nowhere in *Painting as an Art* is Wittgenstein's notion of "seeing-as" discussed, though the determined reader will find a footnote, referring to the earlier essay "Seeing-as, Seeing-in," which makes the curious argument that between these two positions, the one mentalist, the other conventionalist, there is no real opposition. Wollheim merely assures his reader about "seeing-as" that there is "but another phenomenon closely related to it, which I call 'seeing-in.'"

The theory about seeing-in and twofoldness issues in *Painting as an Art* in a theory of interpretation. For if the painting is the record of the fulfilled intentions of the painter, then it is the message in the bottle that the viewer with the right equipment will be able, accurately, to interpret, to read. This reading will coincide exactly with the painter's intentions. In Wollheim's account, it will not have to suffer the interference of that historically different context carried by the viewer who comes in the 20th century to view, say, a work of the 17th.

Nor will it have to undergo what semiology has taught us to see in the transmission of messages: a fundamental, original fission within the message itself into an irreparable multiplicity of meaning, a multivalence that confronts us (but not Wollheim) with the fact that language is an immense structure overwhelming and eluding any one individual's attempts to master it. We always end up meaning both more and less than we intended. (With a kind of monotonous regularity throughout *Painting as an Art*, Wollheim dismisses both semiotics and historical contextualism as irrelevant to the job of interpretation, which is to respond to painting "as an art.") The painter's fulfilled intentions and the knowing spectator's interpretation of the work will, Wollheim argues, let nothing escape. This is, of course, also a way of warding off the idea that interpretation might ever legitimately *add* anything to the work of art.

WOLLHEIM OFFERS several demonstrations of this coincidence of intention and interpretation. I will comment only on his treatment of Manet, although much the same kind of things could be said about his readings of Ingres and Picasso. Manet, Wollheim maintains, was the painter of the secretive subject, the figure whose glance can never be engaged, for that figure is always looking away, lost in his or her own private thoughts. Thus, the spectator who is implied by the paintings

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(as the counterpart to the depicted figures) is a spectator who is frustrated in his attempts to catch the eye of the pictorial subject. In this account of Manet, we could say, beauty is in the eye of the overlooked beholder.

The interpretation that Wollheim proceeds to build on the foundations of this reading is truly fantastic. It begins with the overlooked spectator's frustration luring him into the depths of the work, where he is greeted by the blank surfaces of Manet's undifferentiated backgrounds, which in turn serve as "dream-screens" onto which the spectator projects his fantasy and his frustration, which in turn become part of the painting's depicted content. It involves also the notion that Manet adds a quality of sexual ambiguity ("of sexual impersonation, of *travesti*, of drag") to the "dream-effect" of these figure compositions, in an attempt, again and again, to recreate a primal couple (his parents) fused in union.

For a start, this is expecting quite a lot from the viewer, even for a theory of projection. But more important, Wollheim is wrong. *Do* the figures in Manet's paintings look away? What are we to make of the *Olympia*'s insistent, brazen stare, a transfixing gaze that in its confrontational character has often been seen as opening the way to pictorial modernism? And what of the stare of the nude in the *Déjeuner sur l'Herbe*, of the woman in the doorway in the Boston Museum's *Street Singer*, of the lady seated against the railing in the National Gallery's *Gare Saint-Lazare*, of the female toreador in the Metropolitan's *Mademoiselle Victorine in the Costume of an Espada*?

A whole art historical literature has arisen around the meaning of these formidable, hectoring stares, these optical solicitations of the viewer. Michael Fried, for example, in his book-length essay "Manet's Sources," argues that the inaugural function of this stare by a single figure in the painting at its viewer is Manet's attempt "to establish a particular kind of relationship between the beholder and the painting as a *whole*, in its essential unity as a *painting*." That is to say, it is precisely the stare that carries a major burden of Manet's painterly ambition: to hold the picture together, to secure the experience of a unified, continuous, pictorial surface through the command of a singular, unitary, narrative focus. The reader of *Painting as an Art* is informed in a footnote of various of Fried's considerations of the relationship between the beholder and painting (in Chardin, David, Courbet) and the way this is effected by the depiction of gazes, and further is told that "for all the disagreements that I have with the way in which the issues are framed, I have found Fried's writings enormously stimulating," but not a hint is given that Fried has ever written on Manet, specifically on the issue of the stare.

NOR IS THE reader advised that T. J. Clark, in *The Painting of Modern Life*, has also written a complex and important analysis of the *Olympia*, including the function of her gaze. For Clark, modernism is about the onset of a fundamental ambiguity in the world itself, understood as the field of signs that the modern spectator is called on to interpret; and the stare of Manet's models plays an important role in setting up this kind of modernist fissure, precisely because of its startling directness. But then this kind of analysis arises from those enterprises (semiology and historical contextualism) that Wollheim finds so unenlightening. It belongs to a kind of art history to which Wollheim seems utterly dead: an art history that has accepted the degree to which signs and social structures *exceed* the grasp of the individual, an art history that is seeking to understand the forms of dependency between the artist and the systems of representation that function as his or her already elaborated context. It is an art history for which Wollheim's idea of intentionality, or his notion of aesthetics as a Rorschach test, or his entire philosophy of projection, is as quaint as phlogiston and as creaky as the idea of spontaneous generation.

ROSALIND KRAUSS

Rosalind Krauss is editor of *October* magazine and Distinguished Professor of Art History at Hunter College and The Graduate Center, CUNY.

NOT DYING ON THE MORNING OF THE NATIVITY

"Certainly the sun beamed clearest, radiant and piercing,
while the below-zero cold nipped and froze the flesh,
vegetation at a standstill, a few birds in crisp song."
Or maybe that blinding orb, too bright to be revealing,
warmed every animal into brotherhood like a subtle mesh
of prey and predator, eliminating conflict, doing no wrong.

"Some predicted on that day a great destruction of men
who possessed, to them, a questionable temperament,
unnatural desire, an aberration of what had been made."
But let us consider those who behave themselves, bend
to the power of self, by who they are, not in settlement
with whom they ought to be, bowing before those to be paid.

How easy the world would be, Mother says, if the same
could exist for everyone: the trees would all grow and die,
there would be stones filled with the exact fossil story,
and all men would love women and children with no shame.
Suppose those patterns only covered part of the earth and sky,
David seeking Jonathan, couldn't Jesus love a disciple willingly?

And couldn't Morgan himself visit his close friends Edward
and George without experiencing guilt, not betraying the normal?
He was born alive and feeling after that morn, and now
George wanted to touch his butt, gently but very forward,
sending up the small of his back into his ideas a clarion-call
that Mother's retelling of the stupid legend was cruel somehow.

GARY MITCHNER

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THE CENTER HOLDS, I

Passion & Cunning: Essays on nationalism, terrorism & revolution by Conor Cruise O'Brien

(Simon and Schuster, 293 pp., $18.95)

God Land: Reflections on Religion and Nationalism by Conor Cruise O'Brien

(Harvard University Press, 112 pp., $15.95)

"This is a highly personal book," wrote Conor Cruise O'Brien in the preface to *The Siege*, his history of Zionism and Israel. No more unnecessary prefatory phrase was every written. Which of his books has not been personal? Taken together they make up a kind of intellectual autobiography; a fascinating and sometimes odd autobiography at that.

Over the course of 40 years O'Brien has worn a profusion of hats, as official in the Irish foreign office, part-time (and pseudonymous) literary critic, historian, diplomat at the United Nations, (not very successful) peacemaker in the Congo, university head in Ghana, professor in New York, parliamentarian and minister in Ireland, editor in chief and columnist of a London newspaper, then back to a round of lecturing and writing. The second and much slimmer of these books is a product of that admirable literary old-age pension, the American campus circuit, where the lectures were first given. The first book is a collection of articles, most of them quite recent. I don't say that I prefer the scribbler to the don; they make a good double act. Any attempt at gravity by Dr. O'Brien tends to be spoiled by the cheeky and salty Mr. Conor breaking in.

"Dr.," by the way, was the Dublin research degree awarded for what became *Parnell and His Party* (1957), still one of O'Brien's best books. *Parnell* dealt with the national struggle in the author's own country. His earlier *Maria Cross* (published in 1952 under the name of Donat O'Donnell, when O'Brien was a public servant) was a not very enthusiastic study of contemporary Catholic writers. Already were set out the twin themes that have obsessed O'Brien since: nationalism and religion. What he has had to say about both has depended from time to time on where he stood himself, which has varied over the years. On some of the questions discussed in the brilliant title essay "Passion & Cunning: An Essay on the Politics of W. B. Yeats," for example, he does not, I think, stand quite where he did when it was first published in 1965.

This essay, one of the best short pieces written about politics and culture in early 20th-century Ireland, sets out to show that Yeats's politics during his last 20 years were at least *fascisant*, thus demonstrating that a great writer does not have to be a "nice guy" politically. O'Brien pursues his argument forcefully. With unnecessary force, in fact: when literary opinion elevates open fascist sympathizers like Céline, Hamsun, and Pound, to labor the bad guy-great writer paradox is unnecessary. I think that O'Brien is really writing about something else.

Yeats was a conspicuous Irish patriot during the years when autonomy for Ireland was won. He joined the pantheon of national heroes; "Easter 1916" and "The Ghost of Roger Casement" became sacred national texts. To point out the truth about Yeats's politics in his centenary year, then, *was* a daring iconoclastic act—in Ireland. In other words, O'Brien was addressing one aspect of the myth-making and the rewriting of history that has been ubiquitous in his country, as it has in most new countries. For that matter, until quite recently it was impossible in anything like Irish patriotic circles to point out that Roger Casement's diaries were genuine and that he had indeed been enthusiastically homosexual (not that that made Casement any less of a brave man, or the use made of the diaries by the British government any less despicable).

In this essay, O'Brien was also writing about himself, sometimes unconsciously, sometimes prophetically. For all his antipathy to Yeats's politics and aristocratic posturing, there are echoes from one

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man to the other. Yeats was cut off from the Irish masses by his Protestantism, and by his somewhat exaggerated identification with the land-owning Ascendancy, but to the English he was Irish, with all the potential for contempt that implied. O'Brien comes from a Catholic, nationalist family. He is still Irish enough to resent English patronization. His uncle Frank Sheehy-Skeffington was assassinated by a British officer in 1916. And yet O'Brien stands apart from the grosser passions of Irish nationalism, from the ward-heeling peasant party Fianna Fail that rules Ireland at present, as well as from the IRA. He remarks that Irish politics have not been sympathetic to "poets, aristocrats, and Protestants"; and while he is not quite any of those things, O'Brien is a writer, a gentleman, and a skeptic (the only avowed agnostic ever elected to the Dail) who shares Yeats's anti-clericalism, if nothing else.

Irish politics have not been too sympathetic to O'Brien. His relations with his country were further complicated when he became a Labour member of Parliament, and then, from 1973 to 1977, a minister in the Fine Gael-Labour coalition. As postmaster general, he had to deal not only with posts and telephones, but with the state-controlled radio and television network. In particular, his job meant depriving IRA spokesmen of publicity (or censoring them, however one chooses to put it). That, along with his relentless hostility to terrorism, earned him the hatred of much of Dublin opinion. Even today there is an undercurrent of resentment at this great Irishman as a "shoneen" or a "West Brit." In the 1977 election, he lost not only his ministerial job but also his parliamentary seat. (At a lunch party at the offices of the *Spectator* in London in 1978, O'Brien mused: "I don't think it was because of my opposition to the terrorists. If there was a personal vote against me it might have been because of the telephones." Replied the Dublin-born Miss Mary Kenny: "And God forgive me for saying so, Conor, but you can't blame them.")

And so, if O'Brien has not turned his back on his native country, he has turned to other interests and to other countries: the Middle East, South Africa, Central America. There, and back to ancient Israel, the trial of Joan of Arc, colonial New England, and the America of McCarthy and the National Prayer Breakfast: these are all the subjects of *God Land*. The lectures are a curious reflection on the author. Here he is, man of the Enlightenment and *évolué* Irishman, a citizen of the world, but completely fascinated by the very things, the religion and the nationalism, that he has rejected.

The closer to home the manifestations of religion and patriotism are, the colder the eye O'Brien casts on them. It has taken considerable moral courage to reject the clerical tradition ("never risk the clout of a crozier") of Irish politics, though at least he, unlike Yeats, is not in the impossible position of being a conservative Irish anti-clerical. It has taken physical as well as moral courage to debunk the myths of 1916 and to face the truth about Northern Ireland. (The IRA wants to bomb a million Protestants into—or out of—a united Ireland, which is in a sense rational. O'Brien believes the Northern Protestants are entitled to self-determination, even if that means partition, which is brave and honest. Mayor Koch wants "a united Ireland by consent," which is absurd.) The pieces in *Passion & Cunning* on Bobby Sands and "The Shirt of Nessus" are splendid.

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What is odd is that the farther away from his own island he gets, the more susceptible O'Brien becomes to the appeal of nationalism, even the mixture of religion and nationalism. This is not only true of his increasingly ardent support of Zionism. (At a Fleet Street bar some years ago, there sat the late Richard Ellmann, biographer of Joyce, Yeats, and Wilde; Terence Kilmartin, then the literary editor of the *Observer*; and O'Brien. Kilmartin: "You're a funny pair, a Jew who thinks he's Irish and an Irishman who thinks he's a Jew.") And in his essay "God and Man in Nicaragua," O'Brien says what everyone knows, that the Sandinistas are fierce nationalists, and that a number of priests are active in the movement, as if that dealt with the matter. No doubt Ortega is a dedicated patriot. So, too, were Ho Chi Minh and Paul Kruger, which does not make Vietnamese communism or Afrikanerdom any more admirable.

One of O'Brien's best subjects is South Africa. The collection includes the pieces that first appeared in these pages describing his visit with his son to South Africa, in defiance of the academic boycott. A long essay, "What Can Become of South Africa?" formulates the problem in these terms:

> The maintenance of the status quo is impossible.
>
> Reforms acceptable both to the white electorate and to politicized blacks are impossible.
>
> Revolution is impossible.

Despite this conundrum he manages to end on a brighter note, foreseeing a possible "multiracial bourgeois coalition," which would at least be better than "the Bothaesque mutations of apartheid," or "Massu apartheid," that is, extreme repression on the lines tried in the 1950s in French Algeria:

> And it would be a lot better also than the rule of the children with the necklace, or rather of whichever ominous child emerged as the victor out of the internecine competition for power within a political movement whose sanction, symbol, and signature is the burning alive of people in the street.

The tone of that last sentence suggests that O'Brien stands a little way apart from the conventional liberal rhetoric, as did his academic-sanctions-busting visit, as does his understanding of (not the same as sympathy for) the Afrikaners. Recognizing the simple fact that the Afrikaner working class has a great deal more to lose from "majority rule" than do rich white liberals is indeed an essential starting point for an understanding of the problem, though it still defeats some people.

HAS O'BRIEN then moved to the right, another liberal mugged by reality? There are certainly passages here that he would not have written 25 years ago. As he ruefully says, one of his critics at the time the Yeats essay was first published implied that it contained "an anti-British and pro-IRA bias, something of which the reviewer, unlike some of my later critics, assumed me to be in the grip." I think that his own experience of office may have given him a kindling of sympathy for the Free State government during the Civil War of 1922-23. And I very much doubt if he would now quote with apparent approval his namesake William O'Brien: "Violence is the only way of ensuring a hearing for moderation." To repeat, it takes a good deal of courage to say and do what O'Brien has said and done in his own country during the last 15 years (and for an Irishman to write, as he does in *God Land*, that the career of one Irish-American, Joseph McCarthy, was a necessary precursor for the success of another, John Kennedy!). In the Irish contest I think that, yes, reality caught him on a dark street.

And to some extent, in other contexts also. In the 1950s and 1960s, O'Brien was a socialist, a "Third Worlder" (before the term was invented), an anti-anti-Communist hostile to the United States and the Atlantic alliance. It was as an African enthusiast that he went to Ghana to be vice chancellor of the university during 1962-65. His reflections on Africa a quarter century on can be found in "The Tale of Africa": "Of course there is corruption in every state, and in every form of society. But Nkrumah's state was one huge rip-off. . . ." Nyerere's socialism is "a bit of a joke." African socialism in general is "a fad of Westernized elites." And:

> Not all the capitalist African states have been successful, but all the (relatively) successful states have been capitalist. "African socialism" has no success stories at all. I say this not to make a fashionable Reaganite point, but simply because it is true, and important.

Wisely and bravely said.

There are limits to his rightward swing. They are defined here by his tendresse for the Nicaraguan regime, by his extreme hostility to the present pope, and by his fending with Norman Podhoretz, who has in the past taken O'Bri-

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en to task precisely for his anti-anti-communism. Podhoretz had denounced Camus for his lack of moral fiber on the communism question. Why did he not stand up to be counted on the American, Western side as Sartre had on the Eastern? But Podhoretz's Americanocentric interpretation of *The Fall* demonstrates

> the main intellectual weakness of neoconservatism, its obsessive reductionism. . . . That, for example, a French-Algerian writer, Albert Camus, might have been more interested, in the late 1950s, in the Franco-Algerian war, then raging, and in his own painfully conflicting feelings about that, than in either the United States or the Soviet Union, does not occur to Mr. Podhoretz even as a possibility.

Not so much touché as a run through. The refutation of Podhoretz displays, by the way, one of O'Brien's most salient, most pleasing, and most unfashionable characteristics—his scrupulosity and fairness in debate with people he surely can't stand.

Conor O'Brien will be 71 in November, but happily he does not behave like a septuagenarian. He has come a long way since his days as a functionary in Iveagh House, a long way since he became in 1961 an international figure and entered the demonology of the right, not least of the English Tory papers, leading his "Red Army in blue berets" through Katanga. As he has worked out his view of life in books and articles he has certainly changed his mind, come to see that some things are not as they once seemed. But I do not think that he has performed (unlike many others you could name) a grotesque volte face. Any radical, any enlightened person for that matter, has always to balance, in Gramsci's phrase, the pessimism of the intellect and the optimism of the will. O'Brien describes himself as *Homo candidus liberalis pessimisticus*. In all the areas to which he has turned his mind and his wit, there is plenty to be pessimistic about. He has not, like Yeats, yet abandoned "all the folly of a fight,/With a common wrong or right," but he has, I think, discovered that even in the Age of Power—perhaps then most of all—the common right is something like old-fashioned liberalism and respect for the individual.

GEOFFREY WHEATCROFT

Geoffrey Wheatcroft is a journalist in London and the author of *The Randlords: The Exploits and Exploitations of South Africa's Mining Magnates* (Atheneum).

THE CENTER HOLDS, II

Came the Revolution: Argument in the Reagan Years by Daniel Patrick Moynihan

(Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 344 pp., $17.95)

For Democrats during the 1980s, the need for effective argument has been especially great. It has been a time in the wilderness. Reagan, and the reactionary forces that gathered around him, immensely enlivened American political life with their ideological barbs and sallies. Democrats—in particular the equivocal and disoriented liberals among them, not yet recovered from the traumas of the 1960s and the oddities of the Carter years—have not been sure how to reply.

All the hair-splitting between neoliberalism, neoconservatism, and paleoliberalism betrayed the disarray of liberalism. First, liberalism was riven by conflicts over race and Vietnam that led to changes of ideological heart. Second, out in Middle America, liberalism acquired the taint of special-interest pleading, and soon made even its adherents squirm. It has become over the course of a decade a label not to parade but to qualify to death with prefixes or to replace with euphemisms, like Mario Cuomo's "pragmatic progressive." At this year's party conventions, liberalism is the dirty "L-word."

What, then, to say, and how to say it? Ever varied, ever divided, the Democrats tried many tacks. Jimmy Carter's idiom of administrative competence and Christian virtue, and the revivalism that sustained it, worked for a time, but the condition of its success was fleeting: the corruption of Watergate. While some centrist and conservative Democrats called for de-kooking their party and for crass imitation of Republicans, neoliberals fashioned cool paeans to managerial expertise. The 1984 Democratic convention provided more emotion-soaked models of persuasion, including atavistic cries of class warfare and Jesse Jackson's prophetic sermon, with its language of wound and redemption.

During most of the 1988 Democratic primaries, Jackson and Michael Dukakis have embodied these warring impulses. The title of Jackson's election-year book, *Straight From the Heart*, captured his soulful version of left politics, which are steeped in the sentiments of suffering and respect. Jackson's fervent style added to fears at the convention that he might disturb the centrist edifice that Paul Kirk and others had so carefully crafted. His communion with his constituency of the despised and the disinherited was touching, but it raised an awkward question for the Democrats: What do they have to say to the majority of Americans?

If Jackson talks from his heart, Dukakis's talk comes from elsewhere. His current book, written with sociologist Rosabeth Kanter, *Creating the Future*, has chapters with titles like "Today's Entrepreneurs, Tomorrow's Technologies: Investments in Innovation." This is the voice not of the moralistic preacher, but of the chief executive officer of Massachusetts. In his acceptance speech, Dukakis humanized himself and his managerial vision, gently hinting at the liberal sentiments that sustain it. But the oblique way he paid homage to Jackson, placing him at the end of a series that included Henry Cisneros and Mario Cuomo, so as to preclude the impression of "special favors" for blacks, underscored his commitment to prudence: he aimed to reassure the audience that the Democrats spoke to, and for, the vast middle.

It is against this background of tense contraries, of incantations, of cautious appeals to competence, that one must read Daniel Patrick Moynihan's *Came the Revolution: Argument in the Reagan Years*. In this compendium of his articles, letters to constituents, and speeches from 1981 to 1987, Moynihan is out to vindicate his insistence that argument matters, that there are good arguments to be argued, and good liberal ones at that. On the issues, he is a good deal closer to Dukakis, whose brand of liberalism by its very circumspection honors the criticisms Moynihan hurled at 1960s reform. But ironically, Moynihan shares something more primal with Jackson: not only a love of speechifying, but a politics of personal style.

Despite Moynihan's professorial bearing and incurable zeal for theoretical musing, the reader must constantly fight

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the temptation to fix on Moynihan himself. This is natural enough. Among working politicians, Moynihan is a rarity, a man who has pursued the active and the contemplative life, as a scholar, social scientist, diplomat, Cabinet member, intellectual, senator.

Recurrently in *Came the Revolution*, Moynihan is literate and learned, an emblem of intellect—emphatically *not* the mere politician, but the politician as teacher. "Not every economist is perhaps as candid on this point as he or she ought to be, but then let the buyer beware. Or keep in mind Melbourne's dictum that he wished he were as sure of anything as Macaulay was of everything." Senator Moynihan, avatar of republican virtue, communes by letter with his constituents on Orwell's theory of "semantic infiltration." Can you picture John Stennis sighing with exquisite archness, "Alas for the hard life of a theoretician"? Imagine Al D'Amato on the subject of a tax proposal, "Call it a *festschrift* for Stanley Surrey."

HOW DO WE judge these various moments of talk? Do Moynihan's preachments contain too much self-display, too many reminders of his membership in the academy, too much insinuation that he is different, above the fray, superior to the run-of-the-lot legislator? The stance of manly resolve that Moynihan cultivated at the United Nations, of "speaking the truth to power" against Third World barbarism, ran a similar dramaturgic risk. The view of the beleaguered United States, or more precisely, the view of the lonely champion of a beleaguered democracy, can shade over into melodramatic self-inflation and mock heroics. The posture of noble isolation can become self-congratulatory sulking; rhetoric can smugly stand in for action.

And yet this high talk is more than mere posturing. After all, no matter how much staff work supports the production of his oratory, Moynihan *is* an intellectual, and he does not flee into some ersatz populism to obscure it. His eloquent reflections affirm the seriousness of his constituents, or at least their capacity for seriousness. His Wilsonian streak keeps alive an ancient view of the duty of the virtuous leader to help form the public will through vigorous moral discussion, even if the United States has not always lived up to those ideals.

Of course, the imperatives of senatorial speech differ from those of the hus-

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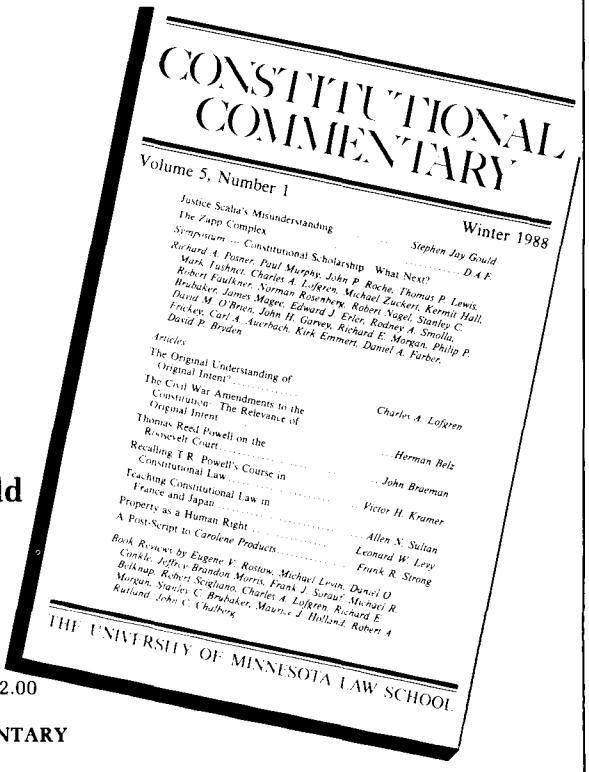

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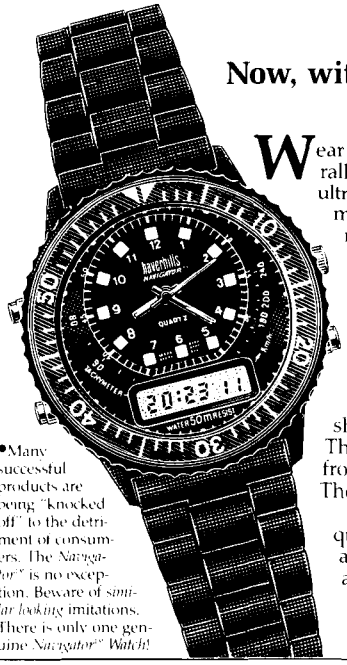

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tings. Moynihan cannot exactly be held up as a model for Democratic presidential aspirants—which is not surprising, given his distinctive persona. The high-toned qualities of his talk probably go down better in a letter to constituents than on television. In *Came the Revolution*, Moynihan is addressing diverse and often sophisticated audiences, beyond the constant, leveling scrutiny of the national media. In some of the settings—a commencement address at New York University, for example—he has the license to indulge in intellectually more complex talk, full of scholarly allusions.

Moynihan has an unmistakable presence, but that's not to say he is a maverick. During the past eight years he has emerged as a forceful leader of the Democratic opposition to the Reagan administration. With grace, he has advanced the liberal case with appeals to moral passion, to facts, to historical analogy. Thus, in a high-flown mood, he grandly promises a rebirth of social policy. Liberalism once again will have its time:

> Democrats lost an election last year but we did not lose a tradition. For ours is the oldest political party on earth. We have known good times and bad. Sometimes we have merely endured. But more often, we have prevailed because at heart we have embodied a great idea, which is that an elected government can be the instrument of the common purpose of a free people; that government can embrace great causes; and do great things.

Actually, these sentences are not arguments, in the sense of sustained, logical exposition of a point; rather, they are affirmations of faith. Like the solemn pieties of inaugural speech, such a rhetorical strategy may sound good, yet its soaring vagueness cedes much to the observer to define the content of those great things, great causes. But it also embraces a rich and resonant tradition, without which debate on the particulars has no meaning. Certain moments in historical life are ripe for such reminders of first principles. The Reagan years would seem to be one of them.

AS BEFITS the agonistic role of an opposition leader, more often Moynihan finds himself embroiled in the less exalted task of specific refutation. His preoccupation with the Social Security trust fund, budgetary deficits, and cutbacks reveals the true legacy of the Reagan years, and the burdens it has bequeathed Democrats. Despite its many failures, the Reagan revolution rear-

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ranged argument in American political life. "Do we really want a decade," Moynihan asks, "in which *the* issues of public discourse, and over and over and over, will be how big must the budget cuts be in order to prevent the deficit from being even bigger? Surely larger, more noble purposes ought to engage us."

Like it or not, liberals have no choice but to fight on this fiscal terrain, and Reagan's extravagance has given them the opportunity to argue that they are the party of responsibility. First they must strip the fiscal crisis of its aura of inevitability. This is not easy, for the public does not easily cotton to quasi-technical subjects like the deficit and trade. Moynihan's intellectual and literary skills are especially well suited to this task, and with compressed clarity, Moynihan walks all manner of audiences through the fiscal and budgetary labyrinth.

THE DEFICIT cannot be attributed only to the bravado of supply-side acolytes, convinced their theories could will into being the Laffer Curve that reality denied. It was a contrivance, Moynihan holds, deliberately engineered. In power, the right discovered Americans did not wish to do away with the welfare state and all its provisions; so other means had to be found to discipline the appetites of the citizenry. A paternal Reagan chastised, "We can lecture our children about extravagance until we run out of voice and breath. Or we can cut their extravagance by simply reducing their allowance." If it was fruitless to argue programs out of existence, then why continue to argue? The deficit served as a proxy for, and thus an effort to subvert, argument.

The effort clearly was not entirely successful. Such cutbacks by the Reagan administration often had the effect of galvanizing the opposition, forcing them to defend programs that they had taken for granted and to find new moral and rhetorical energy for the task. Indignantly, Moynihan deems the proposal to turn AFDC back to the states "as close to a cruel proposal as any that had come from downtown." Writing in TNR in 1982, he captured the callousness lurking there, and he did so in a single sentence, in a single clause at the end of a sentence, with a terminating change of rhythm to accent it. "Under the rubric of 'the new federalism,' [the Reagan administration would] turn the care of dependent children over to those states that give a damn—and to those states that don't."

Throughout these various spats, Moynihan retrieves for liberalism its mantle of common sense and conventionality. He grounds liberalism in fiscal prudence, nurturance of children, nuclear stability, opportunity, Social Security, international law, education, steadiness, respect for the Constitution, optimism, trust that the American government can accomplish something. At first glance, such arguments may not seem earth-shaking, but that is precisely the point. Over recent decades, the reputation of liberalism has been sullied by its identification with quirky ideology and unpalatable change.

MOYNIHAN'S rejoinders to Reaganism evoke a puzzling aspect of *Came the Revolution* that bears on the larger plight and identity of liberalism. For haunting this drama of Moynihan's jousting with Reagan is another drama, this one offstage: the mystery of Moynihan's relationship to his own political past.

If Moynihan has been among our most spirited champions of the liberal endeavor in the 1980s, he was also, during the late '60s and early '70s, among our most spirited critics of liberal folly, although people divide over whether the critique was a friendly salvo from within or a hostile savaging from without. The Moynihan Report on the black family in 1965 became a symbol of intellectual backlash. During his stint in the Nixon White House, he authored the infamous, and equally misinterpreted, "benign neglect" memo.

How do we square this alleged neoconservative of some years back with the liberal champion of the Reagan years? Moynihan himself sheds little light on the matter. In the introduction to *Came the Revolution*, he simply records that "something in the new administration had sent me into opposition in a way I had not ever been before, not felt before." This "something" is incomparably vague. Elsewhere, Moynihan begs the question with the tersely elegant dismissal: "Some welcomed me back from neoconservatism: no, thank you very much." To restore the missing context of these allusions, one has to recall the liberal crack-up in the '60s, and the organic, if submerged, relationship of current liberal practice to it.

The elliptical refusal of Moynihan's "no, thank you very much" indicates his sense of things: there is no sharp break

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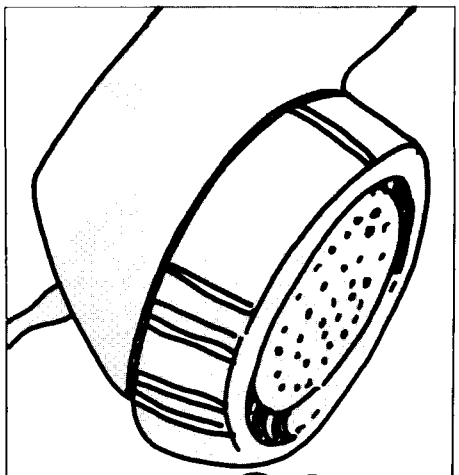

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to explain. And indeed it is plausible that, whatever other forces are at work in this chapter of his life, a principled unity melds the two Moynihans into one. His opening address to the Conference on Setting Municipal Priorities lays out the grounds of that continuity. He declares himself between the "mindless millennialism of the past and the equally thoughtless meanness of the present." *Came the Revolution* consistently hews to this middle way of post-World War II liberalism—the liberalism of Schlesinger's *The Vital Center*, of Bell's *The End of Ideology*, of Trilling's *The Liberal Imagination*—before the anomalies of the '60s disturbed it. The generality of "mindless millennialism," however, hints at a more immediate and personal context to Moynihan's pleas for civility. Poised in the '60s against what they saw as the stridency of leftists and black nationalists—after all, who are those mindless millennialists?—classical liberals had to fight hard on their left flank.

FOR MOYNIHAN, this battle was no abstraction. Reviled as a racist who went around blaming victims, he became a victim. In talking about the pathology of the black underclass in his report, he was simply using Kenneth Clark's idiom of "a tangle of pathology." Nor did he scant the role of joblessness in producing the woes of the black family. Above all, Moynihan was trying to goad the government into doing something to help the black poor. Even as a member of the Nixon administration, in pushing for family allowances and guaranteed income, he affirmed the duty of the government to aid the black poor.

The Moynihan Report fracas vividly dramatized the increasingly angry mood of the white and black left, and the dilemmas that such a turn imposed on conventional liberals like Moynihan. As the decade unfolded, they recoiled from what they took to be illiberal and visionary tendencies emerging within liberalism—hence the need for the qualifier, "left-liberals"—and the left. Some, consumed by their distaste for the left, lost their faith and succumbed to sour and even vicious reaction. Others kept their essential faith but affirmed the ironic and prudent strains within it.

In response to the left, some classical liberals began to practice a tacit theory of talk in domestic politics that was the linguistic equivalent of the domino theory. The strident rhetoric of black nationalists and the student left would keep expanding until someone stood up to it. This was also Moynihan's posture at the United Nations, defending in high dudgeon the endangered values of Western civilization. In the new 1970 preface to their *Beyond the Melting Pot*, Moynihan and Nathan Glazer pointed to the shrill talk of black nationalists, their indiscriminate accusations, and the way they cowed more moderate tendencies in the black community. If leftists silenced others, liberal whites often silenced themselves. Afraid of being accused of racism, they diffidently accepted whatever the left dished out to them.

DIFFERENT TIMES, different issues, different enemies. In the '80s the danger to liberal values came from the right, and Moynihan did not shrink from defending them. The central argument that runs through the various plaints in *Came the Revolution* is that Reaganism was not "conservative" enough, it was radical, and the amiability of its totem could not obscure its radicalism. By threatening to tamper with Social Security, it violated the sanctity of the social contract. In its plebiscitarian passion, New Right jurisprudence threatened to subvert the Constitution. David Stockman, Moynihan notes, "cites authors of meticulous clarity and caution with that element of fervor we associate with zealotry and even intolerance." Stockman's trek from the student left and SDS to the Laffer Curve did not alter this quest for quasi-religious purity. He titles a chapter of his *Confessions* "The Coming of the New Order."

A small irony lies in this ideological zeal. According to the right, an adversary sensibility had come to infect a left-leaning intelligentsia and media elites. But Reaganism, it turns out, equally embodied this adversary sensibility, only this time its purveyors were right-wing economists and assorted movement zealots. In Moynihan's inversion, liberals are practical, and thus retrieve their claim to Americanism; conservatives now have the pointy-heads and "chiliastic" theories.

Liberal Democrats have had to learn two lessons in recent decades, one inspiring, the other chastening, each threatening to undo the other. Moynihan's title playfully intimates the first. The Reagan revolution came, and it went, and the people did not buy it. This, of course, defines the condition for all liberal hopes. The arguments over Bork, the budget, and Central America

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remind us not just how much people at various points on the left share with one another, but also what they share with the American people. To exploit this discovery, the Democrats must keep in mind the second lesson too, whether from conviction or expedience: any liberalism that hopes to gain a hearing in America must ground itself in popular sentiment. Balancing these rival impulses of compassion and technique, purpose and prudence, resolve and irony is more readily proclaimed than accomplished. At the least, in the phases of his feisty life, Daniel Patrick Moynihan declares the possibility of union between skeptical ways and his newfound faith.

JONATHAN RIEDER

Jonathan Rieder, associate professor of sociology at Yale University, is writing a book about moral argument in recent American politics.

TIES THAT BLIND

Born Brothers
by Larry Woiwode

(Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 611 pp., $19.95)

"This is the saddest story I have ever heard," announces John Dowell, Ford Madox Ford's narrator, at the beginning of *The Good Soldier*. Dowell turns out to be a dupe and a fool, more than a little unreliable in his judgments; but the opening gambit remains a stunning one. Indeed, my impulse is to steal it from Ford and pass it along to Larry Woiwode. His two linked novels, *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* (1975) and *Born Brothers*, are strong contenders for that same distinction. Certainly they are among the saddest—the most heartbreaking—of all American novels.

Beyond the Bedroom Wall is Woiwode's epic portrayal of Midwestern life. Fitting together panels in different voices, from different perspectives, he depicts the evolving fates of three generations of the Neumiller family, from the early years of the century up into the 1960s. Landscape and atmosphere are deeply inscribed in the prose, first the dusty Dakota farms of their forebears, later the more hospitable climes of Illinois. At the core of the novel is the courtship and marriage of Martin Neumiller and Alpha Jones, their determined forging of a life, the birth of their five children; later portions focus on the coming of age of the three boys, Jerome, Charles, and Tim.

But the book's real core—for this is not a plotted work so much as a chronicle of hearts and souls—is the unexpected death of Alpha. The tragedy takes place midway through the book. The rest of the narrative, spanning decades in the lives of Martin and his children, is the emotional equivalent of an explosion taking place in slow motion. The entire family is undermined. The loss not only envelops their every thought and action, but seems to penetrate the very floorboards of their house. Though Martin eventually remarries, and the children begin to find their own lives as adults, time cannot dissolve the sorrow. Our last impression of Martin, after his second wife has died, is of a man who has left his heart in the past.

Beyond the Bedroom Wall was in every sense a big novel, a swath-cutter. Grand in scope, ambitious in its organization, it was also prodigal with its prose. Scenes and descriptions were delivered with a kind of small-town garrulousness that threatened to go on and on, and sometimes did. But while the reader might not wish the work any longer, neither would he sacrifice any part of the achieved whole. Woiwode succeeded in bringing "sweep"—that adjective beloved of middle-brow page-turners—to the serious novel.

But what are we now to make of *Born Brothers*, another 600-plus page leviathan that resumes the past of the Neumiller clan? To be sure, it's a different book. This time Woiwode has centered his narrative within the troubled psyche of the son Charles. Yet since the bulk of *Born Brothers* comprises Charles's memories of growing up—of his enmeshed relationship with his brother Jerome, of their mother's death, of his unhappy adolescence—much of the terrain is familiar. It may be that the author mined the heart of his subject the first time through.

The novel begins in New York in the early '60s, with Charles taking a room in a run-down doss-house. He is clearly a young man in distress, moving about without ties or means in the city of refugees. He has ambitions to act but can scarcely rouse himself to attend auditions. Only the price of a bed separates him from the Bowery. But if he has fled his family and his place, he nevertheless spends most of his time lying in bed brooding about the past. A full two-thirds of *Born Brothers* is an assemblage of Charles's recollections. These—some of them merest fragments of a scene—unfold as a kind of portrait of the artist as an evolving sensibility.

From the very first, even before we have begun to delve into Charles's past, we know that this will be, as the title suggests, a saga of brothers. Woiwode opens the novel with a letter from Jerome to Charles—a quick, casual bit of chatter about his medical school internship in Chicago. But it is enough to map the terms of their opposition: success versus failure, control versus chaos. Readers of *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* may remember something of the sort. There, characterizing Charles and Jerome, respectively, Woiwode wrote: "They'll be necessary to each other the rest of their lives, the one with his passionate need to know and be told what everything means, the other already serene in his knowledge, and living among elements that are invisible and his own."

Charles's earliest memories establish the ground of the relationship. Only a year apart, the brothers are, from the start, thrust together:

> A white windmill on wheels, with a blade that turns, rolls between my knees. Uncle Elling's gift. I spin the blade and it windmills away. I pull it back. It wheels away again. I reach for it and a hand like mine hits my reaching hand. I look into the same face I see when Mom holds me above the sink to show me a pouting child. It's my brother, so they say, and he is the missing half. I start hitting him back.

Their early years are marked by just such symbiosis: they sleep in one bed, fight and kick and vie for attention. At times all sense of boundaries disappears, leaving Charles with only a confused feeling of *odi et amo*. Here is how he remembers riding off for the first time on their shared bike: "I breeze by, so happy

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to be free of Jerome I wonder if I don't actually hate him. I'm never apart from him enough to even think this."

But bound up as they are, Charles and Jerome are very different. Though they are both schooled as Catholics, it is Charles who lives with a sense of sin and mystery. And when their mother dies, Charles is the brother who bears the wound. Worse still, he blames himself. *"If only I'd been different from the start,"* he thinks, *"this would never have happened to her."* Try as he might, he never shakes off a residual guilt about her death. While Jerome manages the complex adjustments of growing up without a mother—finally deciding to become a doctor—Charles founders. The pain that originates in his boyhood will deepen until it finally finishes him off.

The crisis that seems to propel the brothers into their separate lives comes when they are in their teens. Jerome crashes the family car. But it is Charles, sitting beside him, who is gravely injured. In fact, he ends up spending a good part of his high school years confined to a wheelchair. Though he tries to carry on with his normal interests and appetites—studying, dating (hot-blooded girls named Dewey and Bobbie)—he is subject to enduring fits of moroseness and self-pity. A telling scene comes when the doctor finally saws the cast off. He is appalled by the near-gangrenous condition of Charles's leg. "I don't understand," he says. "I've put on hundreds of casts and never seen this! Chuck, did you stick something down there?" Charles admits to trying, but cries, "Nothing would reach!" To this the doctor can only add: "That's it. You went and screwed this up."

I DON'T THINK that Woiwode intends this to symbolize Charles's condition, but it's an apt figure all the same. Though he can't quite reach the source of his pain, neither can he leave off trying. The result, as the narrative progresses, is a continual exacerbation of his most conflicted emotions—about his mother, about Jerome—and a continued inability to come to terms with his life. Intercut episodes from a later period, after Charles has left New York, show him in an eroding marriage, struggling with alcoholism. But these glimpses are obscure in their chronology and are riddled with gaps. It's as if the real story ends when he leaves the Midwest to come East. Only those early years are drawn with any clarity.

The momentum of Charles's despair is ultimately toward suicide. Nothing—neither his love for his wife and children nor his devotion to Jerome—is enough to save him. Nor has his wound finally awakened in him the redemptive forces of art. The novel culminates with a long interior cadenza. Charles has slashed his wrists. His memories flash in bright confusion right up to the instant of death, whereupon comes a serene restorative coda, a poem which begins:

> Oh, my brother, remember North Dakota,
> The nights of angular snow, the drift of snow
> That rose until it reached our windowsill
> And then rose slowly up the glass; below
> Its fuming surface, visible through the glass,
> The quiet crystals, glittering, blue, serene.
> Remember the trough of ice that guided
> Our sled down past roots, stumps, stones,
> A culvert, bumping—you on the bottom, me on the top,
> Knocking your breath out—down the steep bank
> To the uneven flatlands of the frozen lake below . . .

On the jacket flap of *Born Brothers*, Woiwode is quoted as saying: "I view this novel as more a companion to *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* than a sequel. . . . I don't believe you need to know the other one at all to completely participate in this one, and it's actually the book that *Beyond the Bedroom Wall* rose out of." How the prior world of the first novel could have arisen from the drama of consequences that is *Born Brothers* is a mystery that only their creator can explain. But I see no way that the downward spiral of Charles Neumiller can be understood without the dense layers of background—and massed feeling—provided in *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*. For even though Charles's memory bursts do cover much of the same material—including, but more obliquely, the death of Alpha—the reader needs to have experienced the full devastation of that death in order to follow the complex oscillations of Charles's psyche. Whether he admits it or not, Woiwode depends upon the prior narration—and so must we.

THE TRUTH of it is that the fragmented sections of *Born Brothers* cohere only around the magnetic center of *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*. Take that away and you have a scattering of bits. Many of these are interesting and intense in their evocation—and the writing is always of a high order—but they find no independent shape. But even *with* the organizing presence of the other book, there are problems. For one thing, the device of a confused, at times overwrought, narrator interferes with the presentation of a sustained account. Woiwode feels compelled to cut repeatedly into his telling in order to remind us of the state of Charles's soul. The alternation feels willed and leaches away much of the dramatic tension.

What's more, as the novel moves to its close, the use of structural artifice is intensified. Woiwode jumps abruptly from one time frame to another, trying to weave the whole together. In a few places he even resorts to stream-of-consciousness narration to convey Charles's delirium. Chaos supervenes. At one moment we are in New York in the '60s, at the next in North Dakota with an older, married Charles. Jerome, so central to the earlier sections, is suddenly shown as married and practicing medicine out West. Since we've never gotten more than glimmers of the adult lives of the brothers, we feel uncentered, lost in someone else's dark wood without a compass.

Woiwode's problems with *Born Brothers* can finally be traced back to his conceptions of Charles and Jerome. The relationship between the two is just not a strong enough axis for the book—at least not as it has been drawn. For as Charles's memories are set out, in his own voice, Jerome never emerges as anything but a

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shadowy alter-ego. The same confusion of boundaries that afflicted Charles in childhood also hobbles his tale. Unable to see Jerome clearly, he resorts to what psychologists call "splitting"; he projects his own polarized feelings upon him. Jerome is a saint, a traitor. Charles sees him everywhere. Indeed, his first thought upon seeing his own newborn son is *Jerome!* But for all this attention, Jerome never becomes a free-standing character, and the book remains one man's monologue.

Born Brothers must be accounted a grand failure. A failure because of its excess and its mounting chaos, and because it cannot be fully grasped without the prior narration of *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*. Grand because for all his lapses Woiwode is a prodigiously gifted stylist. Very few writers can command a prose as responsive to the claims of the senses, or a lyricism as unstrained. His transcription of the inner world of the child—that profundity of perception—catches the full register of nuances:

> I get on my knees to look out the rear window, knowing I can do this now that I've been slapped, and see a sudden change. It's more than night coming down, though night has begun. Snow is descending grayly across a countryside that widens out so flat behind the speeding car it feels we're flying, and the shifting flakes turn pastures here and there among the open fields so gray they start to rise to meet the snow, while yellow squares of stubble caught between them tremble: kites ready to lift off.

Passages like this—and there are many of them—make me think that the theme of fraternal bonding may just be a pretext for Woiwode, an excuse for returning to certain images and atmospheres. This can be the profoundest of all motivations—witness Proust. And Woiwode himself acknowledges it, albeit indirectly. Near the end of *Beyond the Bedroom Wall*, he has Jerome remember a visit from his childhood days. His two uncles, Conred and Elling, have dropped in to pass the time with their sister Alpha. Soon enough, the brothers get to talking about the past. Uncle Elling sums his views as follows:

> This reliving the past happens all the time. . . . Every time it happens, it's like I'm stepping out of what I don't want to be into who I really am. I have to stop myself and say "No, no, no, that's all over! Here's where you are now. You have a wife and kids. You have an important job to do." That's what I say and sometimes it helps, but it doesn't change things much. Old man McGough still means more to me than any millionaire client. . . . The smallest detail from then is clearer than what I did last year, or yesterday, or the day before that, and the older I grow and the farther I get from those days, the clearer and more important the details seem.

Elling's words may not add up to an aesthetic, but they do point out the wellspring of Woiwode's art. A certain confusion is here the price for a connection to a bygone world.

SVEN BIRKERTS

Sven Birkerts's *The Electric Life: Essays on Modern Poetry* will be published by Morrow early next year.

CORRESPONDENCE, *from page 2*

man may in fact dislike is that Rachel and other mothers in my book, no matter how disordered their existence, display some beautiful qualities—in Rachel's case, a tortured but remarkable faith in God and a soaring dedication to her children—and that most of the parents do love their children and try to be good parents in the face of overwhelming odds.

Whitman is correct to say that I am reluctant to castigate victims when the fact of their victimization is so clear. But why would anybody wish to do this? And why, for that matter, would THE NEW REPUBLIC try so hard to emphasize the self-evident failings of some of these poor people while devoting not one sentence to the ruthless, rich hotel owners who brutalize them with impunity, the developers who displace them, or the mayor who is elected with the contributions of both?

"In erasing the old myth" that the homeless are "deinstitutionalized mental patients," Whitman writes, "journalists have created a new [myth] that most of the homeless are families in need of apartments." But in New York City, which is what my book is about, 18,000 of the 28,000 homeless people recorded by the city are indeed families with children. (In Massachusetts two-thirds of the homeless are families; in some communities like Holyoke and Hyannis 90 percent are families.) What, then, is the myth I have created?

Finally, *Rachel And Her Children* is not primarily, and was not intended to be, a treatise on the housing shortage or a work of public policy, impressions that Whitman's article unfortunately conveys. It is a narrative portrayal of some complicated human beings with whom I spent a long time. In writing this book, I tried to keep my voice as gentle and as unobtrusive as possible, in order to allow readers to come very close to Rachel and the other parents in the Martinique. Gentleness does not inspire clever writing. But there is so much effort in your pages to display forensic wit at the expense of others, so little willingness to be exposed to tears. Is mercy embarrassing?

JONATHAN KOZOL
Byfield, Massachusetts

David Whitman replies:
Jonathan Kozol takes too little credit for being clever, and too much for being merciful. I wrote: "*Every study* of homeless families *in urban areas* shows that the majority are black or Hispanic" (omitted words italicized)—not "the majority of homeless families are black or Hispanic." There are rural regions where the majority of homeless families are non-Hispanic whites; we don't have research yet to show whether that's true in small cities. But Kozol's claim that "a large majority of homeless families are white" has no empirical basis (and he cites none).

I stated clearly that the makeup of the homeless population varies from city to city. Kozol confuses the reader with numbers on the *sheltered* homeless. Surveys generally indicate that more homeless live on the streets than in shelters. And since street people are overwhelmingly single, these uncounted homeless substantially alter the statistics on homeless families Kozol cites. In fact, no nationwide count of the homeless—including those taken by the National Coalition for the Homeless—finds the majority are families with children.

The pertinent question about Rachel is: What will end her misery? I argue that homeless women like Rachel need more than just a place to live—often they require rehabilitative services like child care, drug treatment, and psychiatric counseling. Kozol and other advocates actually *minimize* the needs of these troubled mothers by suggesting that a cheap rental apartment, built by the federal government, will largely right these women's chaotic lives. Whose approach is more merciful?

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Arnie

"The elect, the elected . . . they come here
bright as dimes,
and die dishevelled and soft."
—Robert Lowell, "July in Washington"

Not all of them. Some of them stay bright as dimes. But some of them die too soon, like my friend Arnie Raphel.

ARNIE WAS THE American ambassador to Pakistan who was killed in the skies over Bahawalpur last week. I am glad that he was the sort of American whom America showed to the world. Arnie was a tolerant, inquiring man. He did not believe that the planet comprises the United States and countries aspiring to be the United States. He respected, he relished, otherness. He understood about the toughness of cultures; about the hardship of development; about the ubiquity of goodness, beauty, and truth. In this respect, Arnie was a little unlike the administration he served, which came to Washington in the '80s with daring doubts about the wisdom of decolonization, in a mood to free the imperial impulse from the inhibition that it crassly dismissed as a consequence of Vietnam. In Washington in the '80s, a chilling contempt for "the Third World" became confused with a proper sense of American power. There were, there are, certain officials in the Reagan administration whose objective it has been to extend the Darwinism of the president's social policy to the president's foreign policy. Arnie was not among them. He did not suffer from a need for a fight, or for mastery. He was not impatient for the use of force. He was in love with suasion. He served brilliantly in Iran (and even more brilliantly in Foggy Bottom during the Iranian hostage crisis) not least because he had taken the trouble to learn Farsi. In Isfahan, early in his career, he made a careful study of the kinship networks of the society to which he was posted. Arnie was the *un*ugly American.

ARNIE UNDERSTOOD, too, about the remorselessness of realpolitik; I dare say, more than I knew. His last assignment was, in large measure, the Afghan war, a war fought for reasons of morality, certainly, and just as certainly for reasons of state. In Pakistan, Arnie was tireless in the defense of the principle of self-determination, and also of the principle that the enemy of my enemy is my friend. There were moments when I wondered how my gentle friend flourished in the world of interests. But flourish he did, and the United States along with him: the Russian tanks rolling out of Afghanistan are in part the measure of Arnie's cunning.

I SAW ARNIE a few weeks before he died, in Islamabad, where the ambassador's residence may as well be in Rancho Mirage except for the chaste white mosque that glistens in the plain beyond the pool; and in Murree, the old British hill station made to look quaintly, and embarrassingly, like a corner of the Cotswolds. We tramped, Arnie and Nancy, my wife and I, through the tall woods, his bodyguard indiscreetly behind us, and for a while we talked about the satisfactions of strangeness, about the pleasure gained when commonplaces and certitudes are twisted out of shape. Arnie lived in a permanent condition of fascination. He liked to be disabused. I confessed to him that my time in that beautiful, brutal country was leaving me with a sensation of stupidity, that the more I saw, the less I understood. America is a bad introduction to the world. Its uniqueness is useless abroad. It is a happy place that prepares you for little.

THERE WERE IRONIES. We were two Jews absorbed in, and welcomed by, a Muslim society. I wondered what the citizens of Murree made of my cicerone. In his blue Chinese cap, striding calmly through the town with his walking stick, with the natural grace of the truly thoughtful, his skeptical eyes peering through his wire-rimmed glasses, his mustache riding robustly over his laughing lips, Arnie looked to me like a Menshevik in Vilna, like a Yiddish scribbler in command of a café on East Broadway. Except that they didn't speak in Urdu on East Broadway, and Arnie, of the Raphels of Atlantic City, did. Anyway, I am certain that Murree heard its first words of *mammeloshen* that day. And I rather enjoyed the thought of Muslim mandarins saying "Arnie." It complicated the world deliciously.

ANDREWS AIR FORCE BASE, Sunday morning. An airstrip is a desolate place. The secretary of state's plane came to a halt beneath a huge, ugly cloud; the sun that tortured Washington for a summer was refusing to shine. Shultz was returning from Pakistan, where he had represented the United States at the funeral of General Zia. But for us, for the blackened spirits who came to meet him, his mission was to bring Arnie home, and Nancy, and the general who died with Arnie, and his good wife. The hearses waited with their back doors open, ready to finish the fact. The military band played what military bands play, and I was struck by the power of rhetoric to salve. Between the time the engines of the plane were shut off and the doors of the plane were opened, we stood suspended in the imagination of what we were about to see. But when we saw the caskets, everything gave way; hearts really broke; I saw sons of bitches tremble, and reporters cry; grief wrestled with purpose on the tarmac, and grief won. The secretary of defense and the secretary of state explained why these men had died. (They gave the explanations to the press, however, turning away from the family and the friends. This jarred.) The secretaries said true things, generally; but they asked too much. We had barely grasped *that* these men had died. It was too early for meaning. The box, not the flag on the box, was what I saw.

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, Monday morning. The sun shone, and I saw the flag. Many hundreds came. The State Department seemed to have lost its favorite son. The men and women who filled the chapel at Fort Myer were not "bureaucrats." They were that thing that almost everybody thinks they are but almost nobody is: a community. They came to say goodbye, and also, in a kind of professional slap in the face of fate, to say, there but for fortune. In the valley of the shadow of death, they would represent their country. Then we followed Arnie to his grave. Americanness and Jewishness mingled sublimely there; the rabbi rent the garments of the crushed family, and the soldiers by the coffin, in the hard, precise choreography of military mourning, folded the flag; the kaddish was said and the guns were fired. But even two traditions could not contain the sorrow. For a long time we will wait, in the words of a poet, for the absolute to explain.

LEON WIESELTIER

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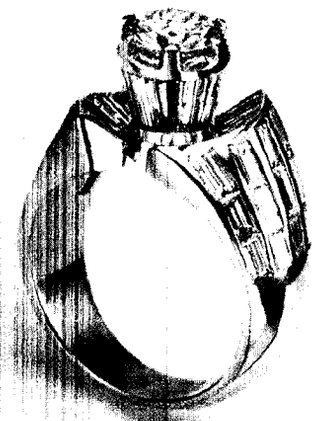

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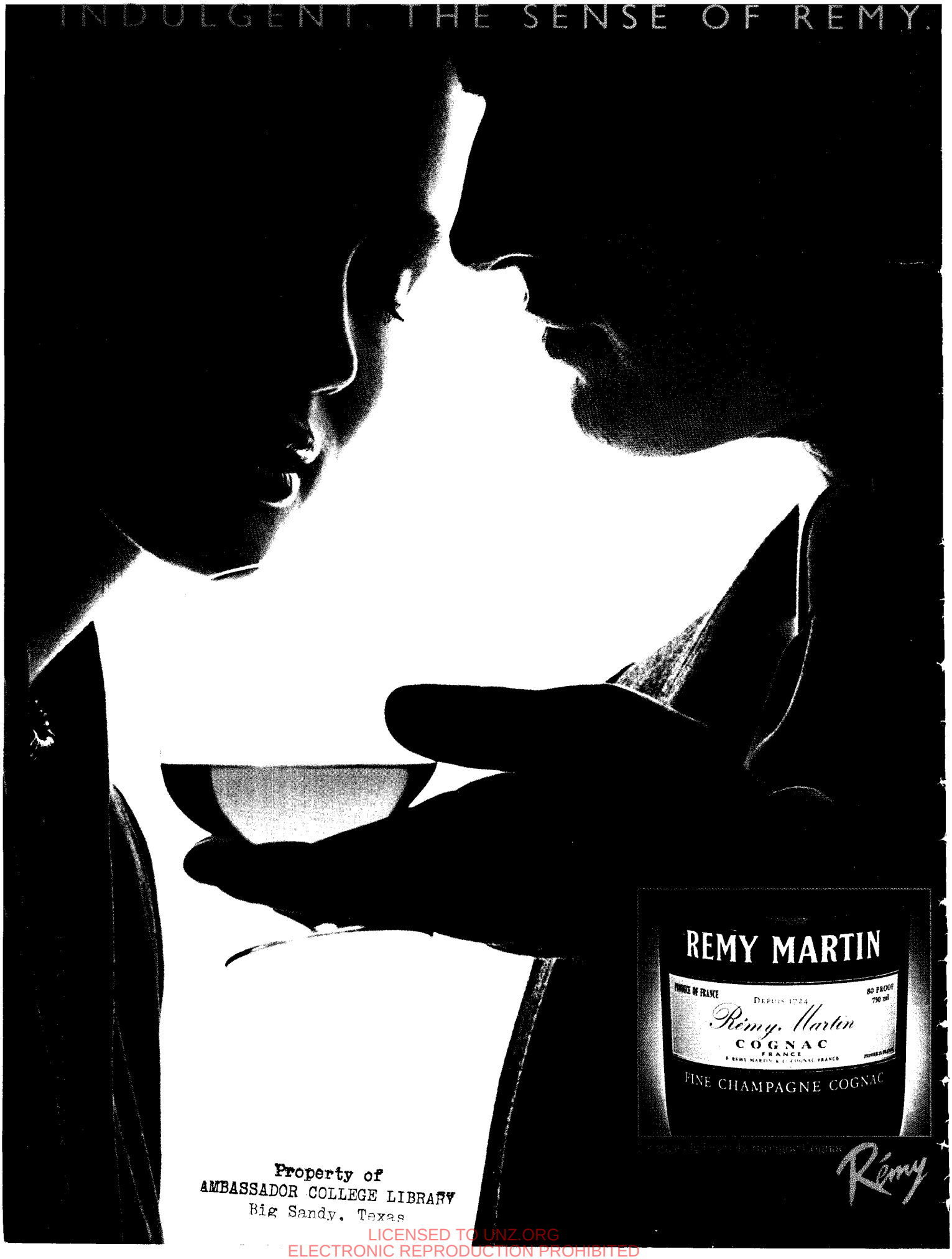

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